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THE INSPIRATIONAL STORY OF RHODA A. BOWLES

WILL DING LIREN DEFEND HIS TITLE?



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WILL DING LIREN DEFEND HIS TITLE?

Can Ding Liren, struggling with poor performances and health issues, defend his World Chess Championship title against rising stars and mounting pressure?

When Ding Liren became World Champion in Astana last May, not many people praised his play in the match. More than a year later, the world champion is seldom seen at events, and when he does appear, he performs poorly.

Several factors contribute to the question: Will Ding defend his title? With the 17-year-old Gukesh making a convincing appearance in Toronto and winning the title of Challenger, many believe the new world champion will be from India.

Another relevant indicator is the interest FIDE has received from bidders in organizing the forthcoming World Championship Match, set to take place from November 20 to December 15. Only three bids were submitted: one from Singapore and two from India (New Delhi and Chennai; FIDE chose Singapore). One FIDE insider noted the difficulty in raising interest because Magnus Carlsen isn't competing, there isn't a player from the West taking part, and neither Ding nor Gukesh are well-known in the West. Additionally, Ding's performance hasn't generated much excitement.

There was hope in FIDE - and the chess world - that China would do more after Ding clinched the title. Both world champions - in the absolute and women's categories - are from China. However, China has not only failed to organize new events but has also backed out of commitments to host events it initially agreed to. This is another indicator that something isn't right.



Photo: FIDE Official - Anna Shtourman

Speculation about Ding Liren has been growing, especially since the Candidates Tournament. Recently, at Norway Chess (see the analysis in this issue of BCM), Ding finished in last place. He suffered four consecutive defeats, causing him to fall out of the top ten in the world. Ding told the Hindustan Times that he considered dropping out of the tournament, adding: "Earlier, I wasn't emotional. After some things happened in life, I've become more emotional. Now after each loss...how do I put it... I'm very sad, very upset."

Speculation about Ding's health is fueled by his own statements. In an interview in April this year, he mentioned problems with exhaustion and sleep, which had led to depression, and that he had been treated in a clinic twice.

In Norway, Hikaru Nakamura weighed in: "I've played Ding many times, we're colleagues over the years, but he definitely doesn't seem like the same person." Nakamura's comments are relevant because, if Ding drops out, the American will take his place, having finished second in the Candidates.

I was in New York in June for the World Corporate Team Championships. At a reception following the opening ceremony, I ended up chatting with Hikaru Nakamura and a few others. One person asked about

the elephant in the room: "Do you think Ding will drop out and are you preparing for the match?"

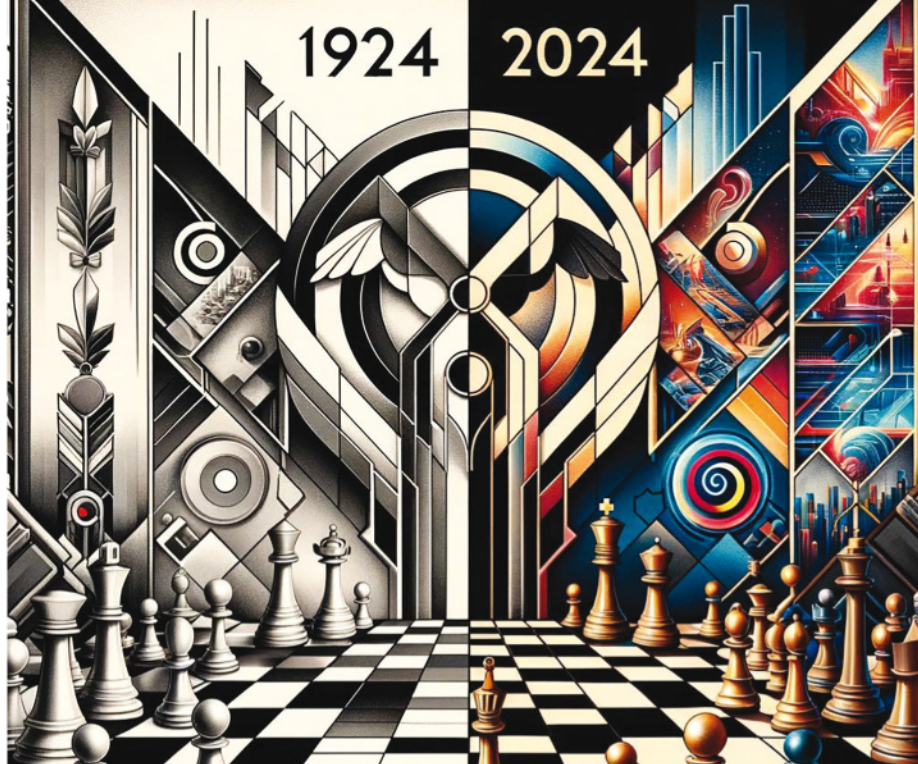
Nakamura's reaction was as expected: he said he thinks it is more likely that Ding will play than abdicate. Nakamura refused to comment on whether he is preparing for the match but indicated that such a scenario is quite plausible.

There are several reasons why it might be realistic for Ding to drop out: his questionable health, lack of public appearances, poor performances in events he does play in, lack of initiative in the chess world, and the absence of visible support or interest from China. On the other hand, if he plays and loses, he would lose his title but still receive a decent share of the \$2.5 million prize fund, so why would he abandon that?

Finally, there are those who hope Ding will drop out. A match between an American, the popular chess streamer Hikaru Nakamura, and the youngest and strongest Indian hope, Gukesh, would be a much greater spectacle and draw more attention both inside and outside of the chess world.

Whatever the outcome, interesting times lie ahead.

BCM Editor



QUOTES AND QUERIES BY ALAN SMITH

A CENTURY OF FIDE: TRACING THE JOURNEY FROM 1924

This year the chess world celebrates the centenary of the formation of The International Chess Federation - FIDE. However, the first idea about forming a world body of chess was discussed 10 years earlier, in 1914, by the German and Russian Chess Federation and, before then, the idea was considered by the British Chess Federation.

The outbreak of the First World War laid those ideas to rest. (Ironically, 100 years after, chess again finds itself in the web of problems caused by the games of Great Powers.)

It was not until 1924 when Pierre Vincent, the General Secretary of the French Chess Federation, brought the idea of FIDE back to life. On 20th July 1924, in Paris, during the 8th Olympic Games representatives of 15 chess federations came together to form

the governing body of chess. A century later, the chess world will again be meeting in Paris on 20th July, just before the kick-off of the 2024 Summer Olympic Games, held in the French capital.

Of course, no chess event is complete without a chess tournament, and that was the case in 1924 and the forming of FIDE. In the town hall of the 9th Arrondissement in Paris, 54 players from 18 countries came together for a tournament.

In the following lines, Alan Smith reminds us of some of the great names and games from this time and digs deeper into the history of FIDE, which BCM will write more about in the coming issues.

Editor

6256 The first tournament organised by FIDE was the Amateur World Championship, held in Paris to coincide with the 1924 Olympic Games. Paradoxically the tournament took place before the meeting which established the organisation!

There were 54 entrants divided into nine groups. Only the group winners would qualify for the final group. The other competitors would meet in an eight-round Swiss system.

Play commenced on 12th July at the Majestic Hotel. Here, we will pick up the story after round four of the preliminary groups.

There were three players with 100% scores, Apscheneek (Apseniks) in Group 5, Chepurnov in Group 7 and Havasi in Group 8. All three were already guaranteed a place in the championship final. Mattison (Matisons) in group 1 needed a draw to join them and he duly achieved this. Colle and Vajda led by half a point and were also successful. The round five games in the other groups saw a change in the top of the order. Roberto Grau beat Euwe in round three and was still in pole position in Group 3. Euwe won, while Grau defended too passively and was well beaten by Marin. Group 9 saw Skalicka lose, to be overtaken by both Palau and Romih. Group 6 was also a close run, Golmayo and Schulz tied with 4, Golmayo was placed first on tie break.

The nine-player final was a hard-fought affair. Golmayo led with +2=1 but then lost two in a row. After five rounds Mattison and Colle were on +2 while Euwe and Chepurnov had +1. These players met in round 6. Euwe beat Mattison, while Colle was defeated by Chepurnov. Just behind them Apscheneek seemed to have blown his chance by losing to Vajda. Round 7 provided the surprise of the event when Euwe lost with white to Palau. Mattison was on +2 Colle, Euwe and Chepurnov on +1, these four could all hope to win the gold medal. Colle had the bye in round 8, Euwe lost again and was out of the running for first place. Havasi followed Euwe's play from round 6, only to find Mattison had an improvement ready.



The poster for the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris

Hermanis Mattison - Kornel Havasi

Paris 1924

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.c4 c6 4.cxd5 cxd5
5.♗c3 ♗c6 6.♙f4 White risks little in this line.

6...e6 7.e3 ♗d6 8.♙g3 0-0 9.♙d3 ♖e8
10.♖c1 Two rounds earlier Mattison lost to Euwe when the thematic.

10.♗e5 fell foul of 10...♗xe5! 11.de ♗d7
12.f4 ♖b6 13.♖e2 d4!

10...a6 11.0-0 ♖e7 12.♙h4 ♗d7 13.♙b1 h6
14.♖d3 ♖d8 15.a3 ♗f8 16.e4! dxe4 17.♗xe4
♙e7 18.♙xf6 gxf6 18...♙xf6 is refuted by
19.♗d6!

19.♗g3 f5 20.d5 ♗a7 21.♖fd1 ♙b5
22.♖b3 ♙d6 23.dxe6 fxe6 24.♙a2 rc8
25.♖xc8 ♗xc8 26.♗d4 ♙d7 27.♗dxf5 ♖c7
28.♗xh6 ♙c6 29.♖c4 ♖g7 30.♖h4 ♙c7
31.♖e1 ♙d7 32.♗g4 ♙d8 33.♖h5 ♗d6
34.♗e5 ♗f5 35.♗g6+ 35...♗f7 36.♖xf5+

1-0 (Source: *Olimpbase*)

Mattison was a point clear at the start of the last round, but faced Colle; if he loses a three-way tie was possible. The game was drawn, Colle unable to realise an edge, Mattison was the champion, Apscheneek made it a Latvian double by defeating Chepurnov, while Colle was third.

Mattison did better with black than with white, +3=2-1 when moving first, +4=3 with black. Overall the final saw more wins for black than white, +15 =13 -8.

6257 The consolation tournament at Paris 1924 was an eight-round Swiss. Players carried forward their scores from the group stage. This made Schulz the leader with four points, half a point ahead of Davidiescu, Grau, Koltanowski, Reca, Romi and Voellmy with seven more players on three.

Karel Hromadka made the best score in the Swiss +5=3, giving him +7 =5-1 overall. for first place, half a point ahead of Schulz, with Erwin Voellmy in third place.

Here is a brisk king hunt by the reigning French champion, played in round 3 of the preliminary stage.

Georges Renaud - Edmond Lancel

Paris 1924, Group 8

1.d4 d5 2.♟f3 ♟f6 3.c4 c6 4.e3 e6 5.♟bd2 ♟bd7 6.♟d3 dxc4 6...c5 is correct.

7.♟xc4 b5? 7...♟e7 8.0-0 b5? 9.♟ce5 ♟b7 10.♟d2 a5 11.a4 b4 12.♟xf7! Grunfeld - E.Steiner Meran 1924.

8.♟e5 ♟b7 9.♟b3 h6 Renaud thought 9...♟xe5 was better.

10.♟d2 a6 Preparing ...c5

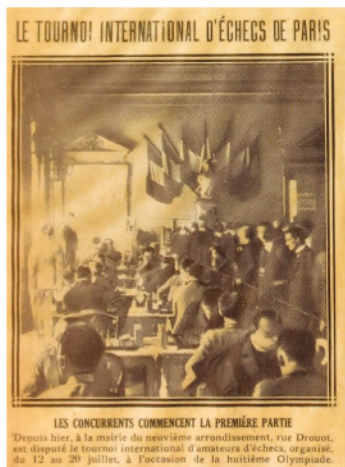
11.♟g6! fxcg6 11...♟g8 is too passive.

12.♟xg6+ ♟e7 13.♟b4+ c5 14.dxc5 ♟d5 15.c6+ ♟f6 15...♟xb4 16.cxb7 ♟b8 17.♟xb4+ ♟f6 18.♟g4 ♟c5 19.♟e5 Renaud.

16.♟xf8 ♟xc6 17.♟d6! ♟xg6 18.♟c2+ ♟f6 19.♟h4 ♟e5 20.♟xe5+ ♟xe5 21.♟g6+ ♟d6 22.♟xh8 ♟a5+ 23.♟e2 ♟xh8 24.♟hd1 ♟c7 25.♟ac1 ♟b6 26.♟g6 ♟d8 27.♟xg7+ ♟b8 28.♟e5+ ♟b7 29.♟f1 ♟f8?? 30.♟g7+

1-0

De Nederlander, 29th November 1924



The playing venue of the 1924 tournament: The town hall of the 9th Arrondissement in Paris

Renaud scored +6=4-3 to finish 4th equal in the consolation group.

Nine of the players were reunited at Bromley the following year. Mattison won a ten-round tournament, saving his best for the four-player final.

6258 The main business of Paris 1924 was the founding of *Federation International des Echecs* - FIDE. The fifteen founder members met on 20th July, representatives from Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

The congress was held less than six years after the Great War. There were no representatives of Austria or Germany.

The delegates elected the Dutch player Alexander Rueb as the first president of FIDE. He continued in that role until 1949.

Three years later, the first Olympiad proper was held in London. The attempt to distinguish between amateur and professional players had been quietly forgotten. Dr Tarrasch and Mieses led the German team of four, while Austria sent a five-player side led by Grunfeld and Lokvenc.

REPORT: ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024

Photo: David Llada

DRAMATIC FINISHES IN KENILWORTH: **JONES AND MIRZOEVA** SEIZE ENGLISH CHESS CROWNS

By IM Shaun Taulbut

Photo: ECF and FIDE/David Llada

The English Championships ended with a bang in Kenilworth as both the Open and the Women's title was decided in tiebreaks.

GMs Gawain Jones and Mickey Adams locked horns in the open section while WGMs Elmira Mirzoeva and Katarzyna Toma squared off in the women's category. All four players had racked up 6 points out of seven in the regular rounds.

The playoffs kicked off with two rapid games (20|10). If needed, blitz games (5|3) followed. An Armageddon game loomed as the final decider.

Gawain Jones and Michael Adams entered the open section's final round neck and neck. Adams wielding the white pieces shook hands with Ameet Ghasi. Jones however, slugged it out with Peter Wells for 59 moves to force a playoff for the crown. In the rapid tiebreakers that followed, Jones grabbed the upper hand. He snagged a win with black in a queen endgame then held firm with white to clinch the Championship.

Mirzoeva snagged the women's crown. She drew 1-1 in the rapid games with Toma, then she clinched victory by winning both blitz games.

Both Jones and Mirzoeva showed some serious grit - they clawed their way back from behind in the final round to snatch victory in their respective sections.

As Leonard Barden noticed in his article for the FT - "Experience triumphed over youth at Kenilworth last weekend when both the Open and Women's English Championships were won by grandmasters. Talents in their twenties, teens, and pre-teens had been prominent in the early rounds."

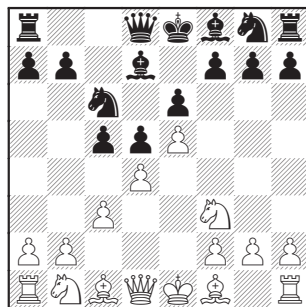
Here we will look at two most interesting games from the Open competition of the English Championships.

We start with a positional win by Michael Adams against Danny Gormally

Michael Adams - Danny Gormally

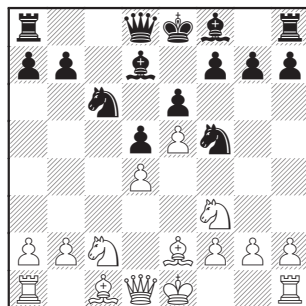
English Open 2024 Kenilworth ENG (5.1)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 ♖c6
5.♗f3 ♕d7



6.♕e2 ♗ge7 Worth consideration are 6...♗c8 or the break 6...f6.

7.♗a3 cxd4 8.cxd4 ♗f5 9.♗c2

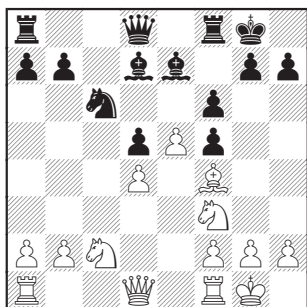


9...♕e7 9...♖b6 10.0-0 ♗c8 is worth consideration again here.

10.0-0 0-0 White now plays to exchange the strong Black knight on f5.

11.♕d3 f6 11...♗c8.

12.♕xf5 exf5 13.♕f4



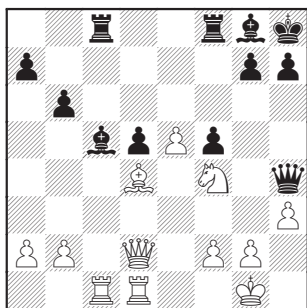
13...fxe5 An active try is 13...g5 14.exf6 ♗xf6 15.♗e5 f4 gaining space on the kingside.

14.dxe5 White has the edge now with control of the central dark squares.

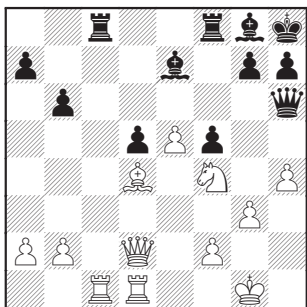
14...♗e6 15.♖d2 Taking control of g5.

15...♖c8 16.♗fd1 ♘h8 17.h3 ♗d7 18.♗cd4 White cements his control of the dark squares.

18...♗g8 19.♖ac1 ♘xd4 20.♗xd4 ♗c5 21.♗e3 b6 22.♗e2 ♗e7 23.♗d4 ♖h4 24.♗f4



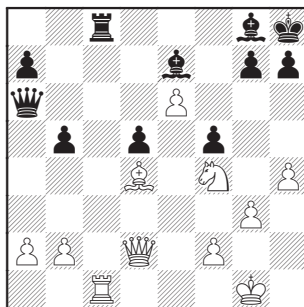
24...♗e7 25.g3 ♖h6 26.h4



Round 7 – view across the top 16 boards

26...b5 27.♖xc8 ♖xc8 28.♖c1 ♖a6 After 28...♖c4 29.b3 ♗b4 30.♖e3 ♖xc1+ 31.♖xc1 a5 32.e6 ♗d6 33.♖c8 ♗xf4 34.e7 queens a pawn.

29.e6



White now has the decisive threat of ♗g6+ followed by ♖h6+ and mate on g7 and Black has no defence as ...29...♗f8 is met by 30 ♖*c8 and then 31 e7 deflecting the Bishop from defence of g7.

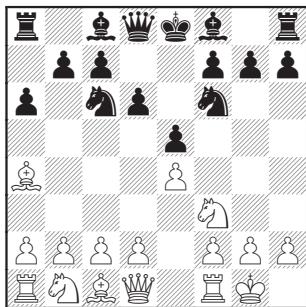
1-0

Now a tough struggle in which Gawain Jones won against Peter Wells in the last round to come up to equal first. Jones was black and he had to win in order to get a chance to play for the first place, as Adams made a quick draw with the white pieces.

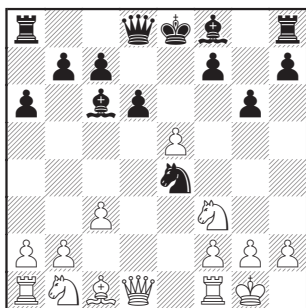
Peter Wells - Gawain Jones

English Open 2024 Kenilworth ENG (7.2)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6
5.0-0 d6



6.c3 ♙d7 7.d4 g6 8.♙xc6 ♙xc6 9.dxe5 ♘xe4



English Championship round 7 top boards:
Mickey Adams vs Ameet Ghasi and
Peter Wells vs Gawain Jones

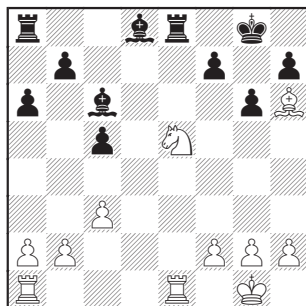


10.♘bd2 ♘c5 11.♙e1 ♙e7 12.exd6 cxd6
12...♙xd6 is also possible.

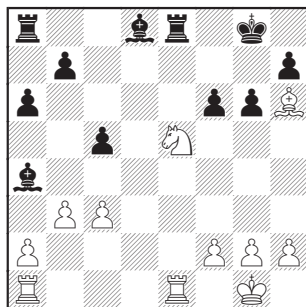
13.♘b3 13.♙e2 ♘e6 14.♘d4 is worth
consideration here.

13...0-0 14.♘xc5 dxc5 15.♙xd8 ♙xd8
16.♙h6 ♙e8 17.♘e5

Black is slightly behind in development and
needs one move to secure his back rank.



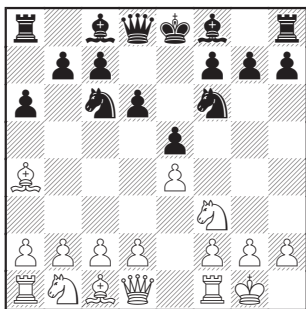
17...♙a4 18.b3 f6



19.♘g6 An intermezzo; 19.♘d3 was worth
consideration but Black has counterplay.

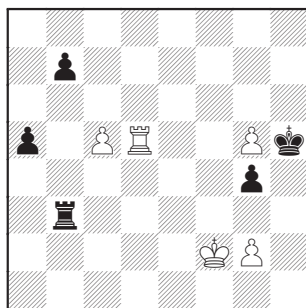
19...♙xe1+ 20.♙xe1 ♙xb3 21.axb3 hxg6
22.c4 If 22.♙e8+ ♙f7 23.♙f8+ ♙e7
24.♙g8 a5 25.♙xg6 b5 with counterplay on
the queenside.

22...g5 Black now has play against the
White bishop on h6.



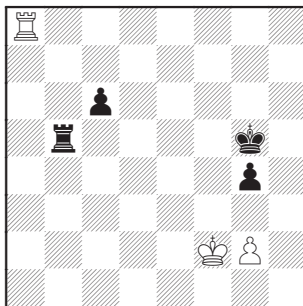
22...♔f7 23.♙e3 ♙e7 is also possible but Black aims for an edge.

23.h4 ♔f7 24.hxg5 fxg5 25.f4 g4 26.♙g5
♙xg5 27.fxg5 ♔d8 28.♖e5 ♔d3 29.♖xc5
♖xb3 30.♔f2 ♔g6 31.♔d5 ♔h5 32.c5 a5



33.c6 bxc6 34.♖xa5 ♖b5 35.♖a8 ♔xg5

White still has drawing chances but in practice it is difficult to defend as the Black King can assist the passed c-pawn to advance.



36.♖g8+ ♔f4 37.g3+ ♔f5 38.♖f8+
♔e6 39.♖g8 ♖b4 40.♔e3 ♔d6 41.♖g5
♖a4 42.♖g8 ♔c5 43.♖g5+ ♔b6
44.♔e2 c5 45.♔e3 ♔b5 46.♔e2 ♔d4
47.♔e3 ♔c4 48.♔e2 ♖e4+ 49.♔d2
♔b4 50.♖g8 ♔b3 51.♖b8+ Best is
51.♖c8 ♖c4 (51...c4 52.♖b8+); now
Black gains a vital tempo by interposing
his rook

51...♖b4 52.♖c8 c4 53.♖c5 ♖b8 54.♖g5
c3+ 55.♔c1 ♖f8 56.♖b5+ ♔c4 57.♖g5
♖f1+ 58.♔c2 ♖f2+ 59.♔c1 ♖g2

0-1

ENGLISH WOMEN'S 2024 KENILWORTH ENG THU 20TH JUN 2024 - SUN 23RD JUN 2024
LEADING FINAL ROUND 7 STANDINGS:

Rk	SNo	Name	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	2	WGM Toma, Katarzyna	ENG	2355	6	1	29	26
2	3	WGM Mirzoeva, Elmira	ENG	2260	6	0	30.5	27
3	4	Hryshchenko, Kamila	ENG	2257	4.5	1	30.5	28
4	8	Rida, Ruqayyah	ENG	2155	4.5	0	26.5	25
5	5	WCM Dicen, Elis Denele	ENG	2194	4	0	29	26
6	6	WFM Varney, Zoe	ENG	2169	4	0	26	24.5
7	10	Maton, Emily	ENG	2016	4	0	22.5	21



2024 English Women's Champion
Elmira Mirzoeva and Katarzyna Toma



2024 English Champion Gawain Jones
and Michael Adams

ENGLISH OPEN 2024 KENILWORTH ENG THU 20TH JUN 2024 - SUN 23RD JUN 2024								
LEADING FINAL ROUND 7 STANDINGS:								
Rk	SNr	Name	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	1	Adams, Michael	ENG	2750	6	0.5	34	30
2	2	Jones, Gawain Cb	ENG	2663	6	0.5	31	28
3	11	Wells, Peter K	ENG	2408	5	0	33.5	30
4	4	Ghasi, Ameet K	ENG	2563	5	0	31	29
5	8	Gormally, Daniel W	ENG	2455	5	0	31	28
6	7	Roberson, Peter T	ENG	2459	5	0	30	27
7	6	Wadsworth, Matthew J	ENG	2531	5	0	29.5	26.5
8	3	Fernandez, Daniel H	ENG	2605	5	0	28	25.5
9	5	Willow, Jonah B	ENG	2536	5	0	28	21
10	16	Bowcott-Terry, Finlay	ENG	2328	5	0	27	24.5
11	14	Bates, Richard A	ENG	2373	5	0	26	24
12	17	Badacsonyi, Stanley	ENG	2316	5	0	26	24
13	21	Hobson, Kenneth	ENG	2254	5	0	24	21.5
14	37	Savidge, Daniel	ENG	2157	5	0	22	20.5
15	13	Jackson, James P	ENG	2391	4.5	0	33	29
16	12	Derakhshani, Borna	ENG	2399	4.5	0	28	25.5
17	31	Banerjee, Supratit	ENG	2195	4.5	0	25.5	24
18	27	Seymour, Timothy P	ENG	2208	4.5	0	25.5	23
19	18	Badacsonyi, Frankie	ENG	2295	4.5	0	25.5	22.5

2024
CHAMPION

MAGNUS CARLSEN

NORWAY CHESS 2024

AN ANSWER TO TWO BIG QUESTIONS – ON CARLSEN AND ON DING

By GM Aleksandar Colovic; www.alexcolovic.com

Photo: Norway Chess Official / Stev Bonhage

This year's edition of Norway Chess took place from 27 May to 7 June. It gathered most of the world's elite, including the struggling World Champion Ding Liren.

The tournament was played as a double round-robin format with a peculiar time control, with the players starting with 120 minutes and not getting any additional time after move 40, except for the increment of 10 seconds per move.

With Carlsen's last classical game dating back to November last year, the two main questions that Norway Chess was supposed to clarify were: is Carlsen still the best player in the world in classical chess and has Ding Liren managed to navigate his crisis?

The tournament provided clear answers to both questions: yes to the first (though not with the same margin as before), and no to the second.



IN THE GAME AGAINST CARLSEN,
DING DID NOT PLAY AS A WORLD CHAMPION

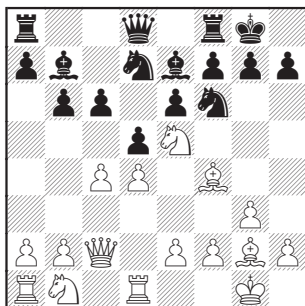
The second question was answered as early as the first round.

In the pre-tournament interviews, Ding Liren said that he was confident and ready to fight. That is not what we saw in his first-round game against Carlsen. Playing with the White pieces, Ding Liren could have gone for a full fight, to confirm his words from those interviews, but...

Ding Liren - Magnus Carlsen

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (1.1)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3 ♙e7
5.♙g2 0-0 6.0-0 c6 7.♖c2 b6 8.♙f4 ♘b7
9.♖d1 ♘bd7 10.♘e5 ♘h5 11.♙d2 ♘hf6
12.♙f4 ♘h5 13.♙d2 ♘hf6 14.♙f4



½-½

Such a blatant refusal to fight demonstrated that Ding's words were just that - words. He was not even close to overcoming his crisis and the worst was yet to come.

Norway Chess had Armageddon games in case of a draw, with White needing to win to gain 1.5 points, while a draw gave Black those points. Now forced to play for a win, Ding tried, but failed, with Carlsen drawing from a position of strength.

The first two rounds saw all draws in classical chess, but round three was already different. Both Carlsen and Ding Liren lost.

Carlsen chose the risky (for this level) Kan Sicilian against Praggnanandhaa. The Indian was surprised, but that didn't stop him from demolishing the risk-taker.

R Praggnanandhaa - Magnus Carlsen

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (3.1)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 a6
The Kan Sicilian is a very rare guest at elite level, though very popular at lower levels, often a favourite choice of grandmasters in open tournaments, trying to beat lower-rated opposition. What works in opens, where the stronger player avoids direct confrontation and heavily analysed lines in hope to outplay their opponent, doesn't quite work in elite events. It's a strange choice by Carlsen,

who must have had pleasant memories from the white side of the Kan, as he beat Anand in game six of their second World Championship match in 2014.

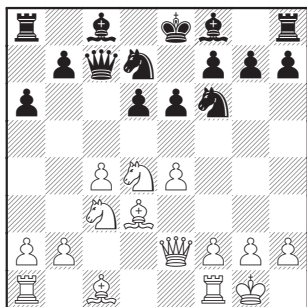
5...♔d3 One of the main continuations, the others two being 5.♘c3 and 5.c4, the latter one being Carlsen's choice in the aforementioned game.

5...♖c7 6.0-0 ♘f6 7.♗e2 Threatening e5.

7...d6 8.c4 This was the idea of 5.♔d3. White didn't block the path of the c-pawn with ♘c3 and can now establish a Maroczy bind in the centre.

8...♘bd7 Another popular plan for Black is the fianchetto of the dark-squared bishop after 8...g6.

9.♘c3



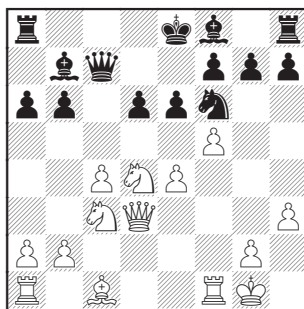
This move proves that Praggnanandhaa was surprised by Carlsen's choice. Theory recommends 9.f4, preventing Black's next move.

9...♘e5 10.h3 Another rare move as we soon exit theory. Thanks to the space advantage White keeps an edge, though Black can also be happy with the outcome of the opening - he got a fighting position with the bishop pair (after he takes ...♘xd3).

10...b6 Carlsen decides to develop the queenside first. He probably never

imagined that his king will never leave the centre, otherwise he would have started with 10...♙e7.

11.f4 ♘xd3 12.♗xd3 ♙b7 13.f5



White is better developed and wants to open the game.

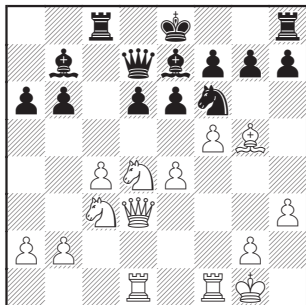
13...♗d7? Carlsen wants to keep the flexible pawn structure, but this hands White the initiative.

13...e5 was necessary. Black gives up pawn control of the d5-square, but stabilises the position. 14.♘c2 ♖c8 15.♘e3 ♙e7 with a complex game ahead where both sides have their chances.

WITH CARLSEN'S LAST CLASSICAL GAME DATING BACK TO NOVEMBER LAST YEAR, THE TWO MAIN QUESTIONS THAT NORWAY CHESS WAS SUPPOSED TO CLARIFY WERE: IS CARLSEN STILL THE BEST PLAYER IN THE WORLD IN CLASSICAL CHESS AND HAS DING LIREN MANAGED TO NAVIGATE HIS CRISIS?

14. ♔g5! ♕e7 15. ♖ad1 White developed with tempo and Black is now under pressure. White would like to continue with ♗g3, when there would be pressure against the pawn on d6 and along the g-file.

15... ♖c8



Black wants to keep the white queen tied to the defence of the pawn on c4. The engine prefers castling, but that was depressing.

15...0-0 was the last chance to get the king out of the centre. However, after 16. ♗g3 e5 17. ♔xf6 ♕xf6 18. ♘c2 White's knights are better than Black's bishops, especially after ♘e3, when White's control of d5 would stress his domination. Black lacks any counterplay here, so perhaps it's understandable that Carlsen didn't go for this line.

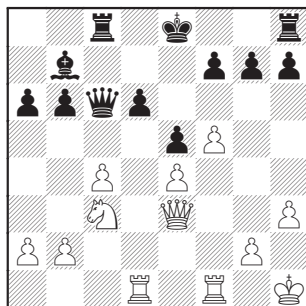
16. ♗e2! Threatening e5. White has a winning advantage now.

16...e5 17. ♔xf6 ♕xf6 18. ♘c2 ♖c6 Black hopes to get some counterplay targeting the pawns on e4 and c4.

19. ♘e3 ♔g5 20. ♖h1 Allowing the exchange of the passive dark-squared bishop, but still keeping the decisive advantage.

20. ♘ed5 was more forcing, as after 20... ♗xc4 21. ♗g4 ♔f6 22. ♖h1 White sacrificed a pawn to establish an untouchable knight on d5. Still, there was no need for this.

20... ♔xe3 21. ♗xe3



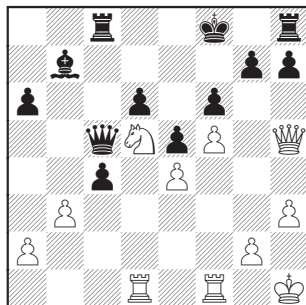
21...f6 21... ♗xc4? 22. f6! ensures that the black king can never castle to the kingside. 22...g6 23. ♗xb6 and White is winning.

22.b3 b5 22...0-0 23. ♘d5 is devastating, threatening ♘e7 and ♗xb6.

23. ♘d5 ♖c5 23...bxc4 24. ♗f3 threatens ♗h5. 24...c3 (24...h5 25. ♗g3 *doesn't help much.*) 25. ♖d3 c2 26. ♖c1 and White will round up the pawn on c2.

24. ♗f3 Threatening ♗h5, but going to g3 was also possible.

24...bxc4 25. ♗h5+ ♖f8



26. ♖f3! Stopping ...c3. Black is lost because thanks to the unsettled king he can never get the rook on h8 into the game.

26... ♔xd5 27. ♖xd5 ♗b6 28. bxc4 ♖xc4 29. ♖b3 White uses the open files on the queenside to enter Black's camp and start attack against the black king.

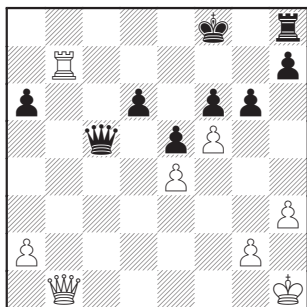
GOING STRONG:
R PRAGGNANANDHAA



29...♖b4 30.♙dd3 ♜xb3 31.♖xb3 ♜c7
32.♜d1 Intending ♜b1 and ♖b7.

32...g6 33.♜b1 This stops the king from
stepping on the seventh rank in view of ♖b7.

33...♜c5 34.♖b7



Cutting off the king. The end is nigh.

34...gxf5 35.♞h2 Preparing ♜b3 and
avoiding the checks from c1 and f4.

35...♖g8 36.♜b3 d5 37.♖xh7 Threatening
♜b8.

1-0

What impresses in this game is the ease
with which Praggnanandhaa outplayed
Carlsen after seemingly not-too-serious
mistakes in the opening.

This game clearly showed that frivolities in
the opening are not allowed at elite level.
Even though objectively Carlsen's position
was fine around move 13, the inherent lack
of solidity that is necessary when playing
with the black pieces at this level didn't
take too long to show.

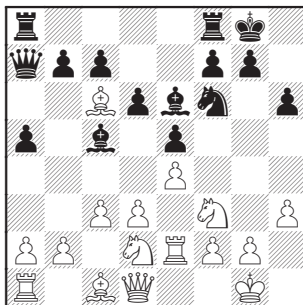
Ding Liren lost in a fashion that became
typical of his recent losses.

Fabiano Caruana - Ding Liren

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (3.2)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♘f6 4.d3
♙c5 5.0-0 0-0 6.♙bd2 d6 7.c3 a5 8.h3
h6 9.♖e1 ♙e6 10.♙b5 ♜b8 11.♖e2 All
theory so far, with the other main move
being 11.♙f1.

11...♜a7 12.♙xc6!?





LOSING A DRAWN ENDGAME
ISN'T SOMETHING YOU SEE EVERY DAY
FROM THE LIKES OF FABIANO CARUANA

Caruana introduces a novelty in this well-explored position, with the main moves being 12.♖f1 and 12.♙a4.

12...bxc6 13.a4 White's idea is to concentrate on kingside play with ♖f1-g3 and the central d4-advance without allowing the expanding ...a4 by Black.

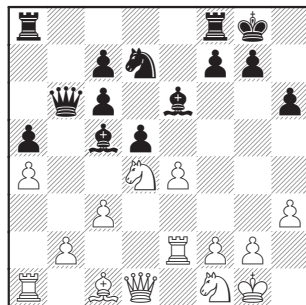
13...♗d7 Black frees the path for ...f5, but also covers the e5-pawn so he can play ...d5.

13...♙b6 14.♖f1 c5 is the engine's suggestion, but closing in the bishop on b6 is not a decision a human would take lightly.

14.♗f1 d5 14...f5 was a decent alternative. After 15.exf5 ♙xf5 16.d4 exd4 17.cxd4 (or 17.♗xd4 ♗e5 18.♗xf5 ♙xf5 19.♙e3 ♙xe3 20.♗xe3 ♖f4 with a balanced position, though still with a lot to play for.) 17...♙b4 18.♗h4 ♙h7 19.♙xh6!? gxh6 20.♖e7 ♗f6 21.♙b3+ ♗h8 22.♙e3 with an unclear position where White has definite compensation for the piece.

15.d4 exd4 15...dxe4 was an alternative. 16.♖xe4 exd4 17.♗xd4 ♗f6 18.♙h4 ♖fe8 with a dynamically balanced position.

16.♗xd4 ♙b6



Starting from this point Ding's play starts to show lack of clarity. In two moves the queen becomes exposed on this square.

16...♙b7 would have saved Black a tempo compared to the game. 17.♗g3 ♙xd4 18.cxd4 dxe4 19.♖xe4 ♙b3 with counterplay.

17.♙e3 White wants to continue with ♗g3, as taking now on d4 would win a tempo against the queen on b6 and centralise the white bishop. Ding still thought that was the lesser evil, though.

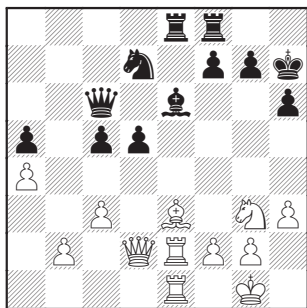
17...♙xd4 17...♖fd8 was possible. The idea is that after 18.♗g3 ♙xd4 19.♙xd4 c5! is now possible thanks to the rook being on the d-file. After 20.exd5 ♗f8! 21.♙e3 ♖xd5 Black obtains counterplay.

18.♟xd4 ♚b7 19.exd5 cxd5 20.♞g3 ♜ae8 Black's position remains compact, though he's on the defensive as White can create threats on the kingside.

21.♞d2 c5 22.♞e3 ♚h7 Defending against ♟xh6. A typical move for post-championship Ding Liren: a solid move, while at the same time passing by an interesting tactical chance, something the earlier Ding wouldn't have done.

22...♟xh3!? was a curious tactical opportunity that World Champion Ding Liren either misses, or doesn't have the confidence to take. 23.gxh3 (23.♟xh6!? ♜xe2 24.♞xe2 ♞e6 is equal.) 23...♞e5! 24.♟f1 ♞d7 25.♟g2 ♞g6 gives Black excellent compensation for the piece. White's pieces are awkwardly placed.

23.♜ae1 ♚c6?!

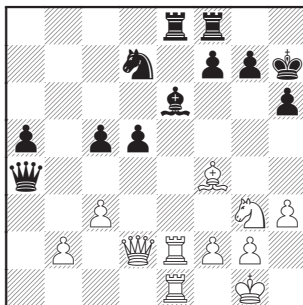


23...♞b3! had the same idea to attack the pawn on a4, but without allowing b4. However, it seems both players missed that chance. Here 24.♟f4 ♞xa4 would have transposed to the game.

24.♟f4?! 24.b4! was a strong move with the idea to gain access to the d4-square for the bishop. After 24...cxb4 25.cxb4 axb4 26.♟d4 White has a stable advantage as his bishop is superior and the outside passed a-pawn is more dangerous than the blockaded d5-pawn. The tactical justification

of the sequence lies in the fact that the pawn on a4 is taboo in view of 26...♞xa4? 27.f4! with the threat of f5. 27...♞f6 28.♟xf6 gxf6 29.♞d4 with a decisive advantage.

24...♞xa4



25.♞f5! White's pieces have obtained menacing positions on the kingside, but Black is still fine. Unless he panics, of course.

25...♞c6?? Which he does. Another characteristic of post-championship Ding is that he fails to keep the tension and seems to collapse at the first sight of it.

25...♜g8! was the only move to stay in the game, preventing the sacrifice on g7. 26.♞d6 ♜ef8 27.♞d3+ ♚h8 may look uncomfortable for Black, but White doesn't have a breakthrough;

IN THE PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEWS, DING LIREN SAID THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT AND READY TO FIGHT. THAT IS NOT WHAT WE SAW IN HIS FIRST-ROUND GAME AGAINST CARLSEN

DOES HE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO
DEFEND THE WORLD CROWN?
IF SO, HE DIDN'T SHOW IT IN
NORWAY: DING LIREN



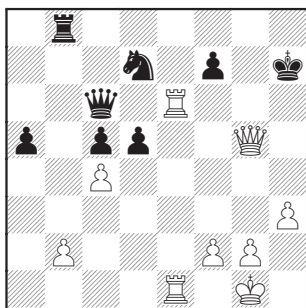
25...♟f6? 26.♞xg7! ♔xg7 27.♞xh6+ ♕h7 28.♞xf8 ♞xf8 29.♞g5 is winning for White, similar to the game.

26.♞xg7! The attack breaks through now.

26...♔xg7 27.♞xh6+ ♕h7 28.♞xf8 ♞xf8 29.♞g5 Black is defenceless as his pieces cannot be coordinated to defend the king.

29...♞e8 30.c4 White wants to remove the d5-pawn in order to get access to the e4-square.

30...♞b8 31.♞xe6

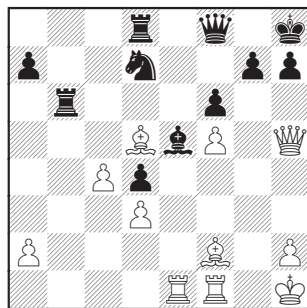


31.♞xe6 fxe6 32.♞e7+ ♔g8 (32...♔g6 33.♞xe6+ wins the queen when White remains a lot of material up.) 33.♞e3 leads to mate.

It would seem that this inability to withstand pressure, both when seeking opportunities for himself and when defending, coupled with what appears to be a fragile state of mind have plunged Ding Liren deep into the throes of depression and self-doubt. In Norway, all it took was one loss for the whole system to collapse again - Ding's level dropped even lower and he started losing game after game, to Nakamura, Firouzja and eventually Carlsen. The last one deserves a special mention.

Magnus Carlsen - Ding Liren

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (6.1)



White has a very pleasant position with the pair of bishops, but Black is very solid.

1-0

29.♞e4 I remember watching this game live. When Carlsen played this move

I saw that the only defence for Black was to play 29...h6. So I expected that move to come quickly. But the move wasn't coming. Several minutes passed and I started wondering if there was a glitch with the transmission of moves. More minutes passed, still nothing. And then, I started wondering, no matter how strange that sounded, what if Black didn't notice White's threat? What if he was thinking what to do, choosing from several candidate moves that may improve his position on the queenside...?

29...♖b2?? When this move appeared on the board, I realised Ding didn't see White's threat at all. That's why he was thinking, as he thought he had a choice...

29...h6 30.♙xd4 ♘xd4 31.♖xd4 ♗e5 gives Black decent compensation for the pawn thanks to his well-placed pieces.

30.♙xh7+ 30.♙xh7+ ♗xh7 31.♖h4#

1-0

An elementary blunder can happen to anyone, but this is not a case where it can simply be brushed off. To his credit, Ding Liren managed to steady the ship and drew his remaining games, though he still ended up in last place.

The tournament showed that Ding Liren's statements were more an attempt to talk himself into a fighting mode rather than being in one already. There is still a lot of work to be done before the World Championship match later in the year, scheduled to take place in Singapore from 20 November, but it won't be easy for him - he failed to pull himself together in more than a year after Astana, so doing the same in four months is problematic at best.

After the trouncing at the hands of Praggnanandhaa, Carlsen gave a very astute statement. He said that after that game he changed his mindset. He stopped "playing for fun" and went into grinding mode. The results changed immediately.

Fabiano Caruana – Magnus Carlsen

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (4.1)

1.e4 e5 Playing one of his closest competitors over the years Carlsen stops the frivolities in the opening and chooses his battle-tested World Championship preparation.

2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♙c4 ♗f6 4.d3 ♙c5 5.0-0 d6 6.c3 a6 One of the many possible set-ups Black has at his disposal in the modern Giuoco Piano.

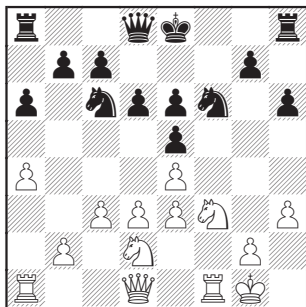
7.a4 ♙a7 8.h3 h6 9.♙e3 The alternatives are 9.♖e1, 9.b4 and 9.♗bd2, all of which can easily transpose to the same variations. The bishop move gives the game a different character after the exchange on e3 as it changes the pawn structure.

9...♙xe3 10.fxex3 ♙e6 Usually Black castles first, but Carlsen immediately goes for the exchange of the second pair of

THERE IS STILL A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE BEFORE THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH LATER IN THE YEAR, SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN SINGAPORE FROM 20 NOVEMBER, BUT IT WON'T BE EASY FOR DING – HE FAILED TO PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER IN MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER ASTANA, SO DOING THE SAME IN FOUR MONTHS IS PROBLEMATIC AT BEST

bishops. As he admitted after the game, he played this game for a draw.

11. ♖xe6 fxe6 12. ♘bd2



12. ♖b3 ♖e7!? (12... ♖c8 is the simple solution, defending both pawns.) 13. ♖xb7 ♔d7 threatens ... ♖h8, trapping the queen, thus forcing White's next move. 14. ♖b3 g5! with good compensation for the pawn as Black can create threats on the kingside after ...g4 and the opening of the g-file.

12...0-0 13. ♖f2 ♖e7 The symmetrical pawn structure with four pawns on the e-file is curious, though one can easily imagine all heavy pieces being exchanged on the f-file with a draw to come soon.

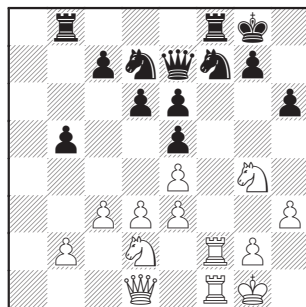
14. ♖b3 ♖ab8 15. ♖af1 ♔d8 The knight was rather useless on c6, so Carlsen reroutes it to f7, while at the same time freeing the path for the c-pawn.

16. ♖d1 16.d4 ♔f7 is very solid for Black, as the exchange on e5 after 17.dxe5 dxe5 is acceptable for him since both pawns on the e-file are well-defended.

16...b5 Black takes some space on the queenside.

17.axb5 axb5 18. ♔h2 With the idea of ♔g4. White tries to be active on the kingside, but he cannot achieve much.

18...♔f7 19. ♔g4 ♔d7



Carlsen judges that the knight on g4 doesn't do much, so he just leaves it there.

It was possible to exchange the knights with 19... ♔xg4 20. ♖xg4 ♔g5 and after a massive exchange of rooks on the f-file the draw isn't far around the corner.

20.d4 c5 Carlsen continues to grab space on the queenside. White's kingside play has come to a standstill, while Black's on the other wing hasn't, which now makes Black's play somewhat easier. Carlsen said after the game that while he wanted to make a draw, his appetite started to grow as the game progressed. Judging from the trend in the game, it is likely that around here he felt that he can confidently play on.

21. ♖e2 After 21.dxe5 dxe5 Black wants to continue with ...c4 and ...♔c5-d3. 22.c4 stopping Black's idea. 22...b4 and Black can try to use the a-file to continue his play on the queenside.

21...c4 Fixing the pawn on b2 and the hole on d3 - now White's pawn cannot leave the d4-square since then ...♔c5-d3 becomes a problem.

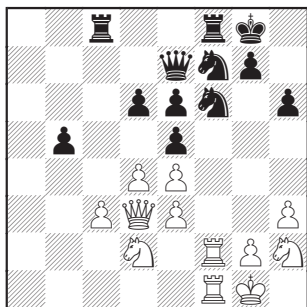
22. ♔h2 ♔f6 23. ♔g4 ♔d7 24. ♔h2 ♖a8 Carlsen realises that he has easier play and continues the game.

25.b3 Caruana gets rid of the backward pawn on b2, but now he is stuck with a backward pawn on c3.

25...cxb3 26.♟xb3 ♖ac8 27.♚d3 After 27.♚xb5 ♖xc3 White's pawn on e3 is tricky to defend.

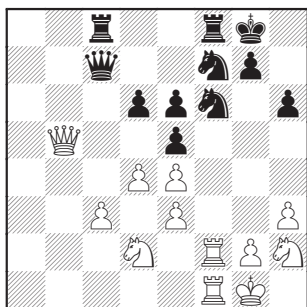
27...♞f6 The knight returns to f6 to target the vulnerable pawn on e4.

28.♞d2



28.♞g4 was still an option, even without a queen on e2 to support that knight. After 28...♞xg4 29.hxg4 ♚b7 30.♞d2 ♖c7 Black still has some nagging initiative, but White should be fine.

28...♚c7 29.♚xb5



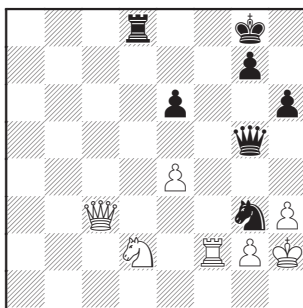
Caruana enters a forcing line intended at simplifying the position.

29...♚xc3 30.♞hf3 ♚xe3 31.dxe5 dxe5 32.♞xe5 ♞g5 In spite of the several exchanged pawns, Black still remains the more active side. White's pawn on e4 is more exposed than Black's pawn on e6.

33.♚d3 ♚c5 34.♞ef3 ♖cd8 35.♚b1 ♞h5 36.♚c1 By the constant threat of queen exchange White manages to get rid of the pin on the g1-a7 diagonal.

36...♚a7 37.♚a1 ♚b6 38.♚b1 ♚c5 39.♚c1 ♚e7 Carlsen still wants to play on.

40.♞xg5 ♖xf2 41.♖xf2 ♚xg5 42.♚c3 ♞g3 43.♞h2



Caruana decides to enter a queen endgame a pawn down, which under normal circumstances he should draw without problems. But the time control at Norway Chess was not "normal circumstances." Caruana likes to think, so usually by move 40 he spends most of his time. With no additional time after move 40, this meant that he played on the several minutes left, plus a 10-second (not 30-second!) increment to see the game off. Playing with eternal time-trouble is a guarantee for doom as nobody can play without mistakes forever with so little time on the clock. Carlsen had more time on the clock and he used that to his maximum benefit.

43...♖xd2 44.♚xg3 44.♖xd2? ♞f1+ wins a piece.

44...♖xf2 45.♚xf2 ♚e5+ 46.♞g1 ♚xe4 The endgame is drawn, as White's king is close to the passed pawn.

47.♚a7 h5 48.♚e7 ♚e1+ 49.♞h2 ♚e5+ 50.♞g1 ♞h7 51.♚e8 h4 Fixing

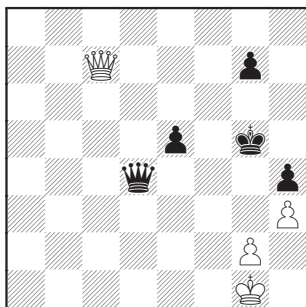


**FIROUZZJA STRUGGLED
BUT SHOWED SOME GOOD PLAY**

the structure, though the position remains a draw.

52. ♖e7 ♜d4+ 53. ♔h1 ♜a1+ 54. ♔h2 ♜f6 55. ♜e8 ♔h6 56. ♔g1 e5 Black's plan is to advance with the e-pawn while at the same time activating the king. The queen on f6 is doing a good job as it cuts off the enemy king from the e-file.

57. ♜a4 ♜f4 58. ♜c6+ ♔g5 59. ♜c7 ♜d4+

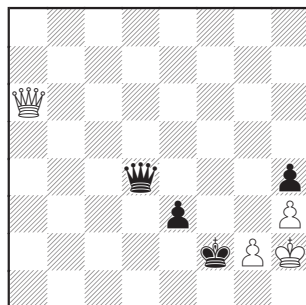


To free the path for the king to f4 and e3 the queen must leave the f-file, thus allowing the white king to approach the e-file.

60. ♔f1 ♔f4 61. ♜xg7 ♔e3 Black sacrificed the extra pawn, but this has little relevance - White's 2 vs 1 cannot create a passed pawn. With the king active on e3 White must be careful.

62. ♔g1 The only move.

62...e4 63. ♜h6+ ♔e2+ 64. ♔h1 e3 65. ♜a6+ ♔f2 66. ♔h2??



Carlsen was surprised to find out that even here the position was a draw. However, no matter how strong Caruana is, he cannot avoid mistakes indefinitely while playing on 10-second increments.

After 66. ♜a2+! White manages to draw as the king cannot hide from the checks, for example 66...e2 67. ♜f7+ ♔e3 68. ♜e6+ ♔d3 69. ♜b3+ ♜c3 70. ♜d5+ ♔c2 71. ♜a2+ ♔d1 72. ♜b1+ ♜c1 73. ♜d3+ ♔e1 74. ♜d4 and so on.

66...e2 There are no more checks and the pawn promotes.

0-1



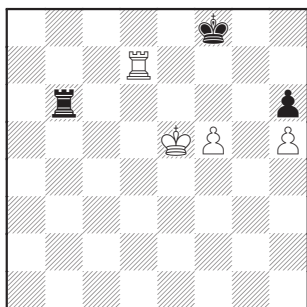
CHESSE IS BETTER WHEN THERE'S NO PRESSURE
TO PLAY FOR MONEY: HIKARU NAKAMURA CAME IN SECOND

A victory against one of his closest competitors gave Carlsen wings. It was an unexpected win, as he wasn't playing to win the game, but the bonus was more than welcome.

After the rest day the eternal time-trouble problem afflicted another player.

Magnus Carlsen - Alireza Firouzja

12th Norway Chess 2024 Stavanger NOR (5.1



Firouzja was defending well for a long time, but long time is not forever.

77.♖d6 ♖xd6?? A hallucination. The amount of stress a player endures defending with little time is enormous. Firouzja forgets about the method of triangulation.

77...♖b1 78.♖xh6 (78.♔f6 ♔g8) 78...♔g7 79.♖g6+ ♔f7 leads to a theoretically drawn rook endgame with pawns on the h and f-files, but here, too, there are pitfalls that Black can easily walk into with little time to think.

78.♔xd6 ♔f7 79.♔e5 ♔e7 80.f6+ ♔f8 81.♔f4! ♔e8 82.♔e4 Distant opposition wins the game.

82.♔e4 ♔f8 83.♔e5 ♔f7 84.♔f5 ♔f8 85.♔g6

1-0

The third win in a row was the one mentioned above against Ding Liren.

These three wins were enough for Carlsen to win the tournament, counting the three points for a win in the classical.

**HE WON, BUT - WHY
IS CARLSEN WINNING
CLASSICAL RATING POINTS
BY WINNING GAMES WHICH
AT THE END HAVE MORE IN
COMMON WITH BULLET
THAN CLASSICAL?**



Traditionally, his +2 score (three wins and one loss) gave him a shared first with Nakamura.

Nakamura continued to impress in classical chess. He found the formula that works for him (“I’m a streamer, this is just a hobby, no pressure to earn money...”) and he keeps recycling it. Using his Candidates preparation he was doing fine after the openings and his usual resourcefulness and intensity were enough to score two wins (against

Praggnanandhaa and Ding Liren) and keep him out of trouble in the other games.

Norway Chess again didn’t fail to entertain. However, in the end, it’s worth repeating a question I read on social media: why is Carlsen winning classical rating points by winning games which at the end have more in common with bullet than classical? It’s a valid point and perhaps the organisers will consider a more sensible time control next time around.



NORWAY CHESS 2024

FINAL STANDINGS

Rk		Player	Pts	Earnings
1	NOR	MAGNUS CARLSEN	17.5	NOK 700,000
2	USA	HIKARU NAKAMURA	15.5	NOK350,000
3	IND	PRAGGNANANDHAA R	14.5	NOK200,000
4	FRA	ALIREZA FIROUZJA	13.5	NOK170,000
5	USA	FABIANO CARUANA	11.5	NOK150,000
6	CHN	DING LIREN	7	NOK120,000

Nine-Year-Old

Bodhana Sivanandan:

ENGLAND'S YOUNGEST CHESS OLYMPIAD PLAYER

Bodhana Sivanandan

Credit: Simon Walker/No 10 Downing Street

In a groundbreaking moment for English chess, nine-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan from Harrow has been selected to represent England at the Chess Olympiad, making her the youngest ever to achieve this feat.

Bodhana's journey into chess began during the 2020 lockdown. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, she discovered a passion for the game and started honing her skills. Just 15 months after learning chess, she got noticed by Leonard Barden who described her as "exceptional".

In 2022, Bodhana shared her love for the game: "I love to play chess because it helps me to recognise patterns, focus my attention, and is helping me to learn how to strategise and calculate moves in advance. Also, I like the way the chess pieces move on the board, especially the knight."

Bodhana's list of achievements is remarkable for her age. In 2022, she dominated the European Schools age group championships in Rhodes, winning all 24 games and securing three gold medals. She continued to shine as she defeated former British chess champion Peter Lee in an exhibition match in 2023. By March 2024, she had risen to become the world's number one under-10 girl.

The preparation for the Chess Olympiad involves rigorous training, building of team spirit, and sharing knowledge among teammates. Bodhana's selection is particularly significant as it marks her as the youngest ever participant in the England team, showcasing her extraordinary talent and dedication to the sport. Also, her age will put both her and the rest of the team in a somewhat unusual situation and it will be interesting to see what chemistry can be conjured up among them.

While Bodhana's future in chess is still unfolding, she is undoubtedly on the path of becoming a great champion.

Bodhana Sivanandan's story is a testament to the incredible heights that can be reached with passion, dedication, and talent.

BCM wishes her luck and we will be following her closely!

BCM Staff

CAIRNS CUP 2024



Tan Zhongyi with Rex Sinequefield
and his wife Jeanne Cairns Sinequefield

TAN DOMINATES

By GM Aleksandar Colovic; www.alexcolovic.com

Photo: St Louis Chess Club Official

The Cairns Cup, held from June 13 to 23, marked a milestone in women's chess by offering a \$200,000 prize fund, comparable to top-tier open category events like the Sinequefield Cup. However, not everyone was happy about the prizes.

The Cairns Cup, which took place from 13 to 23 June, is for women's chess what the Sinequefield Cup is for the open category.

After Norway Chess, which had a women's event running in parallel to the open category, the Cairns Cup was the second event in close succession where a top-level women's tournament saw the players compete for similar prizes to the elite events in the open category. The total prize fund at the Cairns Cup was \$200,000.

This increase in the prize money sparked some debate in the public: most welcomed the increased earning opportunities for women in chess, though there were other voices as well, who argued that it wasn't entirely fair that a male player rated 2368

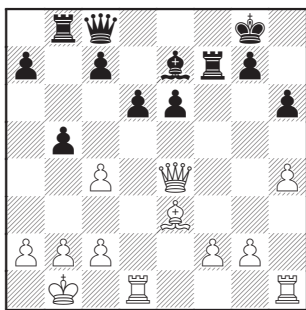
(like Alice Lee) or 2457 (like Elisabeth Paehltz) - to take two random ratings from the event - would never in his lifetime get a chance to play a top-level event with that type of prize money, implying there was reverse discrimination.

These types of arguments are never-ending in the chess world and both sides are heavily entrenched in their convictions. What is certain, though, is that more money in chess is definitely a good thing and the chess public should be grateful to Jeanne Cairns and Rex Sinequefield.

The event gathered some of the best players in the world and mixed them with US players. Apart from the legendary players like Krush and Zatonskih, a chance was given to one of the young talents Alice Lee and it has to be said that she didn't disappoint. She scored 4/9, beating Kosteniuk and Zatonskih, finishing on shared seventh place. Her win against the former World Champion was a fine counter-attacking effort.

Alexandra Kosteniuk - Alice Lee

4th Cairns Cup 2024 Saint Louis USA (4.5)



With her last move 19...b5 Black tries to open the b-file for counterplay.

20.cxb5? Suprisingly, Kosteniuk obliges.

20.c5! kept the b-file closed and gave White a stable advantage. After 20...dxc5 21.g4 the extra pawn is of little relevance as Black has a lot of weaknesses and White has a clear plan of a kingside attack.

20...xb5 Now Black has serious counterplay along the b-file and the game is balanced.

21.c4?! A second move in a row that is far from optimal. By advancing the c-pawn White weakens the long diagonal and the b2-pawn.

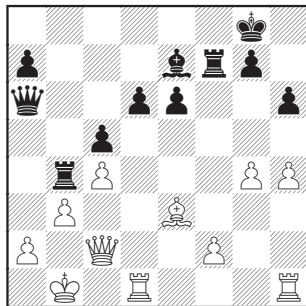
21.♖c6 would have avoided any trouble on the queenside, but the endgame is equal after 21...♖b8 22.h5 ♗b7 23.♗xb7 ♖xb7

21...b4 22.♗c2 c5! Taking control of the d4-square, thus avoiding ♕d4.

23.g4 White starts the pawn storm, but Black is faster. It is well-known that a piece attack is always faster than a pawn storm and here we have another confirmation of that rule.

23...♗a6! Forcing further weakening of the long diagonal.

24.b3



White cannot avoid b3 as 24.♖c1? ♕f6! 25.b3 is already too late in view of 25...♖xb3+! 26.♗xb3 ♖b7 with a winning attack.

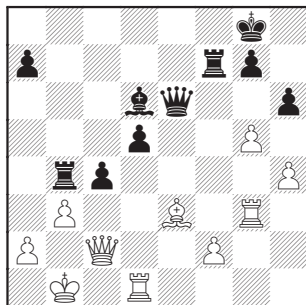
24...d5! Blasting open the pawn shelter around the white king.

25.cxd5 c4! 26.g5 This isn't so much an attack as it's an attempt to control the f6-square in order to prevent the bishop from coming to the long diagonal.

26.dxe6 ♗xe6 threatens ...cxb3.

26...exd5 27.♖h3 27.gxh6 ♕f6 includes the bishop in the attack and the rook will follow suit from the b7-square.

27...♗e6 28.♖g3 ♕d6





THE EVENT WAS DOMINATED BY TWO PLAYERS WHO PLAYED AT THE CANDIDATES: TAN ZHONGYI AND ANNA MUZYCHUK

Black's play is very aggressive, attacking a white piece with every move.

29.f4 ♖c7 Threatening ...cxb3.

30.gxh6 cxb3 31.♖g6 White would be delighted if she manages to exchange queens, but that won't happen.

31...bxa2+ 32.♔a1 ♕e5+! 33.♔xa2 ♖b2+ 34.♔a1 ♖d2+ 35.fxe5 ♗xe5+ Mate follows shortly.

0-1

American chess has produced its fair share of young talents, but they have all inevitably chosen to pursue education instead of a chess career. Many parents in the USA see chess as a way for their children to obtain a good scholarship thanks to their chess achievements. This means that a lot is invested in the child's chess development in the beginning, but the moment the child gets a good scholarship, chess is immediately abandoned.

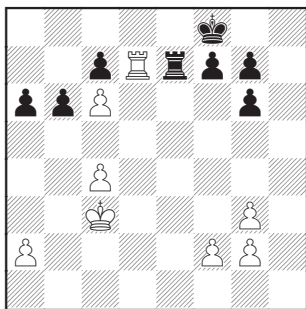
Alice Lee (14) is the youngest American female to achieve the IM title. With all the support she can enjoy in the USA she can certainly have a good professional career, but whether she chooses that or prefers the road of education, only time will tell.

The event was dominated by two players who played at the Candidates: Tan Zhongyi and Anna Muzychuk. While Tan won the Candidates quite dominantly, Muzychuk had an awful event in Toronto. As Garry Kasparov used to say, no chess preparation goes to waste, it is all a matter of timing. For Muzychuk, the timing when her form and preparation coincided with the period after the Candidates. She scored an undefeated +2 at both Norway Chess and the Cairns Cup, both times finishing clear second behind a Chinese player - World Champion Ju Wenjun in Norway and Tan Zhongyi in the USA.

The curious thing is that Muzychuk scored her two wins in the last two rounds. In the last one she outplayed Lee from an equal rook endgame.

Anna Muzychuk - Alice Lee

4th Cairns Cup 2024 Saint Louis USA (9.3)



White already repeated the position once by giving a check on d8 and returning to d7 and now she tries the only possible way to keep the game going.

34.c5 ♖e8 The only move.

34...bxc5? 35.♔d8+ ♕e8 36.♖xe8+ ♜xe8 37.♜c4 ♜e7 38.♜xc5 leads to a winning pawn endgame for White.

35.cxb6 cxb6 36.♖b7 ♜d8 37.♖xb6 ♕e2 White won a pawn, but Black's active rook should provide enough counterplay for a draw.

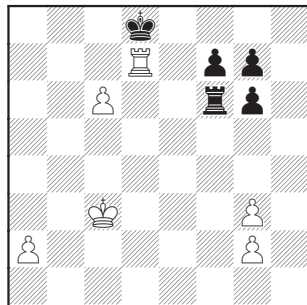
38.♖xa6 ♕xf2 39.♖a7 ♜f6? Black goes for the wrong pawn.

39...♖xg2 was the correct move. One of the best ways to steer the game towards draw is the reduction of material and here Black achieves it. By taking on g2 Black also threatens to eliminate one more pawn, the one on g3. With only a and c-pawns on the board, very often Black can draw without any pawns on her own. 40.♜b4 ♖xg3 41.♖xf7 ♜g1 with the ideas to give checks from the back and to push the g-pawn should secure the draw for Black.

40.♔d7+?



ALICE LEE (14) IS THE YOUNGEST AMERICAN FEMALE TO ACHIEVE THE IM TITLE. WITH ALL THE SUPPORT SHE CAN ENJOY IN THE USA SHE CAN CERTAINLY HAVE A GOOD PROFESSIONAL CAREER



White misses the first chance.

40.♜b4! ♖xc6 41.♖xf7 ♜c2 42.a4 ♖xg2 43.♖f3! wins for White - the doubled g-pawns are worth nothing while White manages to place the rook behind the passed a-pawn and defend her g3-pawn at the same time.



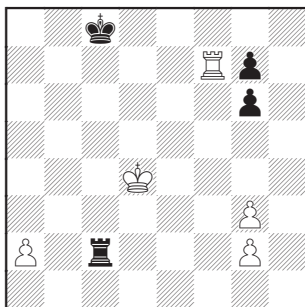
40...♔c8? But Black goes in the wrong direction.

40...♕e8! ensures that Black doesn't lose the f7-pawn. This means that she can create a passed pawn on the kingside later on. **41.♖b4 ♜xc6 42.♞d2 ♞b6+! 43.♔c5 ♞a6 44.♖b5 ♞a3** makes it harder for White to advance the a-pawn while after **45.♖b4 ♜xg3 46.a4 ♜g4+** Black will be able to place the rook behind the a-pawn and then create counterplay with her 3 vs 1 on the kingside.

41.♖d4 It was also possible to go to b4.

41.♖b4 ♜xc6 42.♞xf7 with the same plan to push the a-pawn and place the rook behind the a-pawn.

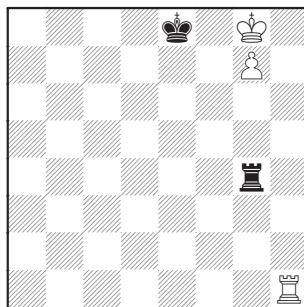
41...♞xc6 42.♞xf7 ♞c2?!



42...♞a6 was more resilient. **43.♞f2 ♞a3 44.♞c2+ ♔d7 45.♔c4** with ♖b4 and a4 to come and White should still win.

43.♜xg7 ♞xa2 44.♕e5 ♜xg2 45.♜xg6 Now it's trivial, as the black king is too far from the g-pawn and can be cut off from approaching it.

45...♔d7 46.♖f6 ♞f2+ 47.♔g7 ♕e7 48.g4 ♞f7+ 49.♖h6 ♞f1 50.♜g7+ ♞f8 51.g5 ♞h1+ 52.♖g6 ♞h2 53.♞a7 ♞b2 54.♞a8+ ♕e7 55.♔g7 ♞g2 56.g6 ♞g1 57.♖h7 ♞h1+ 58.♔g8 ♞h2 59.g7 ♞g2 60.♞a7+ ♕e8 61.♞a1 ♜g4 62.♞h1



Muzychuk's bridge-building capabilities are up to the task.

62...♕e7 63.♖h8 ♕f7 64.♞f1+ ♕e7 65.g8♖ ♞h4+ 66.♖h7+

1-0

Rook endgames are definitely an area Lee should concentrate on in her further studies.

Tan Zhongyi dominated similarly as in the Candidates. She had two difficult positions, against Krush and Harika, but survived both thanks to her usual resourcefulness. On the other hand, when she had her chances, she took them mercilessly.

Here's an example where she sacrificed material for a somewhat speculative attack, but one that worked perfectly thanks to the pressure it created on her opponent.

Tan Zhongyi - Anna Zatonskih

4th Cairns Cup 2024 Saint Louis USA (4.2)

1.e4 e6 The French Defence has been a Zatonskih favourite for many years now.

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5 Several decades back, this move was much more popular than Steinitz's 4.e5, which today is considered as the main line. Both moves are perfectly fine, with the game move offering Black a second chance to take on e4.

4...dxe4 Which Black takes, transposing to the Rubinstein variation (usually arising after 3...dxe4). The alternatives are 4...♙e7 and 4...♙b4 (the MacCutcheon variation).

5.♘xe4 ♙e7 Black can also play 5...♘bd7.

6.♙xf6 ♙xf6 A sharper alternative is 6...gxf6.

7.♘f3 0-0 8.♘xf6+ Not the most popular move and a rather simplistic one. White usually chooses from 8.♙d2, 8.c3, 8.♙c4 or 8.♙d3.

8...♙xf6 9.♙d3 c5 Black counterattacks in the centre.

10.dxc5 A risky decision. White wrecks her structure and banks on her development advantage.

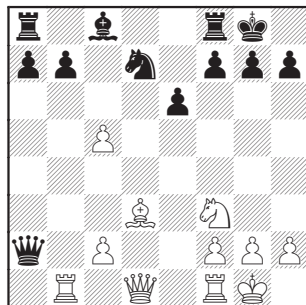
Anna Zatonskih struggled in the event



10.♙e2 cxd4 11.♙e4 g6 12.♙xd4 ♙xd4 13.♘xd4 ♙d8 leads to an equal endgame.

10...♙xb2 11.0-0 ♘d7 12.♖b1 Sacrificing a pawn to speed up the attack.

12...♙xa2 Diagram



Quite possible.

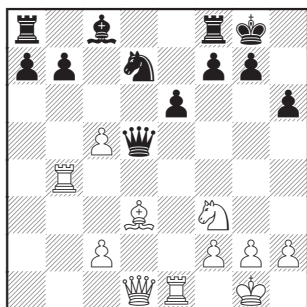
12...♙f6 bringing the queen back to the kingside was probably safer. White has compensation for the pawn after 13.c6!? bxc6 14.♖e1 but Black is out of danger of being attacked.

13.♖b4 White keeps the tension and plans to swing the rook to the kingside.

13.♘g5!? ♘f6 this is safer. (13...h6 14.♙h7+ ♘h8 15.♙e4 ♘f6 leads to unclear play after the forcing sequence 16.♙d6 ♘g8 17.♙h7+ ♘xh7 18.♘xh7 ♖e8 19.♘f6+! gxf6 20.♖b3 ♙xc2 21.♖g3+ ♘h7 22.♙c7 ♘d7 23.♙xd7 ♖f8) 14.♙e2 ♙d5 15.♘e4 ♘xe4 16.♙xe4 ♙xe4 17.♙xe4 a5 18.♙xb7 ♘xb7 19.♖xb7 ♖fc8 with a drawn double-rook endgame.

13...♙d5 13...♙a5! harassing the rook is the engine's preference, but to a human it looks as it only helps White's plan. However, after 14.♖h4 (14.♖c4 this is better, but again White's attack doesn't get going after 14...h6) 14...h6 White doesn't have a breakthrough.

14.♖e1 h6?!



This gives White a target on the kingside.

14...♖xc5 15.♗d2 ♕e7 16.♖h4 looks scary for Black, but she can hold after 16...h6 though this looks very risky in view of (16...♗f6? may look safer, but it loses to 17.g4! h6 18.g5! ♗h7 19.gxh6 g6 20.♗g4 and the attack will break through with ideas like ♗e5, ♖c3, h4-h5.) 17.♖xh6! gxh6 18.♗xh6 f6 19.♗e4 f5 20.♖xe6 ♗f6 21.♗g5+ ♗g7 22.♖e8+ ♗f8 23.♗c4+ ♗h8 24.♗h4+ ♖h6 25.♗d8 ♖f6 and Black holds somehow, though the attack continues after 26.♗e5 b5 27.♖xf8+ ♖xf8 28.♗g6+ ♗xg6 29.♗xf8+ ♗h7 30.♗e7+ ♗g7 31.♗h4+ ♗h6 32.♗e7+ with a perpetual check;

14...g6 was an alternative, though White has compensation after 15.♖h4 ♖xc5 16.♗d2 with a sample line leading to perpetual check: 16...♗d8 17.♗g5 ♗f8 18.♗xh7! ♗xh7 19.♗h6 ♖c3 20.♗xh7+ ♗f8 21.♗h6+ ♗g8

15.♗d2 ♗xc5? This is already a mistake, removing the knight from the kingside. Now it's too far on c5 to join the defence.

15...♖e8 16.♗g4 ♗f8 was one idea to defend, though doesn't look too pleasant for Black;

15...♖c6 16.♗g4 e5 defends the pawn on h6. After 17.♗b5! ♖e6! 18.♗g3 e4 the position is very murky, but Black isn't worse.

A NEW INITIATIVE SUPPORTING WOMEN'S CHESS IN THE US

In a groundbreaking announcement at the Cairns Cup, Dr. Jeanne Cairns Sinquefield, co-founder of the Saint Louis Chess Club, revealed a new initiative aimed at supporting the growth of female grandmasters in the United States. The Cairns Chess Queens Award, a new programme designed to encourage more U.S. female chess players to achieve the prestigious Grandmaster (GM) title, was officially launched.

The initiative, beginning on July 4, 2024, will award \$100,000 to up to five players over the next five years who earn the GM title.

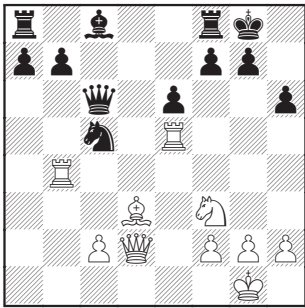
This substantial financial incentive underscores the commitment to increasing female representation in the highest echelons of chess, a field where women are significantly underrepresented. Currently, only about two percent of the more than 2,000 chess grandmasters globally are female, and the United States boasts just one female player who has ever earned the GM title.

“Worldwide there are only 42 female GMs, while there are currently more than 2,000 male GMs. Only 16 countries have developed a female GM and the United States only has one active female GM,” stated Dr. Cairns. “We can do better! We challenge the rest of the world to consider creating similar programs to develop their players so we can create the next generation of competitive female players and leaders in chess.”

16.♖e5 Not bad, especially as Black’s only defence now was to give up the queen.

16.♖g4 is the engine’s preference, giving White a winning advantage. 16...♔h8 17.♙c3 f6 18.♘h4! and Black cannot defend the penetration along the light squares.

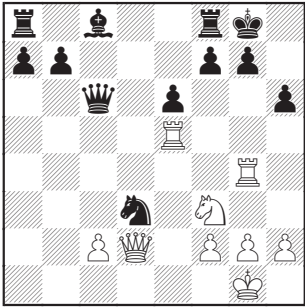
16...♙c6



16...♘d3 is the only way to somehow stay in the game, though White should win after 17.♖xd5 ♘xb4 18.♖d8.

17.♖g4 Now all White’s pieces are taking part in the attack while Black is still undeveloped with an abandoned kingside.

17...♘d3



18.♙xh6! White delivers mate.

18...g6 19.♖xg6+ fxg6 20.♙xg6+ With ♖h5 mate next.

1-0

Tan Zhongyi continued with her fine form at the Cairns Cup, while the World Champion won convincingly the Norway Chess tournament. At the moment they are the best women players in the world and even though their match is still some time away, it is already looking like it will be a great one.

CAIRNS CUP 2024 STANDINGS:													
Rk	Player	Rtg	Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	GM Tan Zhongyi	2540	6		½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1
2	GM Anna Muzychuk	2505	5.5	½		1	½	½	½	½	1	½	½
3	GM Alexandra Kosteniuk	2501	5	½	0		0	1	1	½	0	1	1
4	GM Harika Dronavalli	2489	5	½	½	1		½	½	½	½	½	½
5	GM Nana Dzagnidze	2506	5	½	½	0	½		½	1	½	½	1
6	GM Mariya Muzychuk	2510	5	½	½	0	½	½		½	1	½	1
7	GM Irina Krush	2415	4	½	½	½	½	0	½		½	½	½
8	IM Alice Lee	2368	4	0	0	1	½	½	0	½		½	1
9	GM Elisabeth Pahtz	2457	3.5	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	½		½
10	IM Anna Zatonskih	2327	2	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	

THE CHESS QUEEN OF THE EARLY 1900s: THE INSPIRATIONAL STORY OF RHODA A. BOWLES

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene OBE

I recently came across a handsome boxed chess set of some historical significance. Inscribed on a solid silver plaque, adorning the lid, were the words:

To Mrs Rhoda A Bowles, from the Cambridge University Chess Club, in grateful recognition of her enthusiastic and sustained exertions on its behalf in the cause of International Chess 1903-1908.

Never having heard of the said Mrs Rhoda Bowles, I decided to investigate further, and thereby unearthed a remarkable story concerning a quasi-forgotten heroine of the 64 squares.

The first mention which sprang into light came from the vivid pen of Mrs Bowles herself, an incident that Mrs Bowles later related (as published in the “BCM” in 1987):

“Among my earliest chess recollections I recall a pathetic scene at Hastings during the 1895 Congress. I had just arrived from London, and on the stairs leading to the hall of play I met poor Steinitz, (Wilhelm Steinitz, world chess champion from 1866-1894) who upon seeing me, burst into tears and said, “Oh, Madam Bowles what shall I do?” he said. “I have just lost my game to Lasker, and that is my fourth successive loss, I shall never win again. Even my own pupil, young Pillsbury, has beaten me and I cannot sleep at night; for three nights have I tossed and tumbled, but sleep is denied me, I am utterly broken



Rhoda A. Bowles

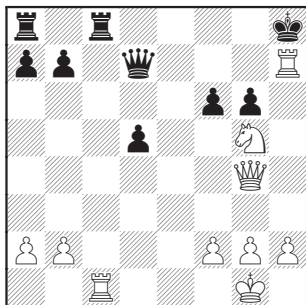
down.” And he wept. I felt a big lump in my throat, but I tried to cheer him, and begged him to go home and go to bed, even if he could not sleep. He thanked me, but went away with a sad heart, promising, however, to take my advice. I was up betimes the next morning, and when he entered the hall I was waiting with a buttonhole, which I pinned in his coat, telling him that I had come to turn his luck, and should expect him to win that day.”

Steinitz then went on to beat Curt von Bardeleben, in perhaps the most celebrated game of his entire illustrious career.

Wilhelm Steinitz - Curt von Bardeleben

Hastings Hastings, 17.08.1895

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6
5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♙b4+ 7.♘c3 d5 8.exd5
♘xd5 9.0-0 ♙e6 10.♙g5 ♙e7 11.♙xd5
♙xd5 12.♘xd5 ♖xd5 13.♙xe7 ♘xe7
14.♙e1 f6 15.♖e2 ♗d7 16.♙ac1 c6 17.d5
cxd5 18.♘d4 ♙f7 19.♘e6 ♙hc8 20.♖g4
g6 21.♘g5+ ♙e8 22.♙xe7+ ♙f8 23.♙f7+
♙g8 24.♙g7+ ♙h8 25.♙xh7+



And Black resigned at this point. As Steinitz demonstrated immediately afterwards, there is a mate in ten moves which can only be averted by ruinous loss of material; analysis follows: ...♙h8 25.♙xh7+ ♙g8 26.♙g7+ ♙h8 27.♖h4+ ♙xg7 28.♖h7+ ♙f8 29.♖h8+ ♙e7 30.♖g7+ ♙e8 31.♖g8+ ♙e7 32.♖f7+ ♙d8 33.♖f8+ ♙e8 34.♘f7+ ♙d7 35.♖d6#

1-0

Further research excavated the following facts based on sources of the day and especially the highly informative *British Chess Magazine* (BCM). In the 1890s, women's chess in England, as in most places, was considered nearly inconsequential. To bring this arena to the forefront required dedication, energy and persistence. It so happened that many of the women who had those requirements and were willing to apply them towards chess also had blood relatives or husbands who were also devoted to the game.

One of the most energetic, dedicated, persistent and effective promoters of women's chess in England during its infancy, was Mrs. Rhoda A. Bowles.

Rhoda Annie Knott of Dawlish, a small town in Devon, married Henry Lewis Bowles, a strong chess player from nearby Exeter. While Rhoda wasn't a chess-player at the time, when she came down with an illness that left her temporarily blinded, her husband taught her to play the game by touch. Rhoda Bowles soon became one of the stronger woman players in England. More importantly, she became one of the most active promoters of women's chess. In January of 1895 she, with a group of other ladies, formed the British Ladies' Chess Club of London. In 1896, she started acting on her idea for a women's international tournament. She found support, backers and competitors (see the competitors' photo above) from all over for the Ladies' 1st International Tournament held in 1897.

Ada S. Ballin enlisted her to write the chess column for her new illustrated monthly, *Womanhood*. Launched in December 1898, this was a magazine of exceptional quality that catered for intelligent, informed and independent-minded women. The chess column was, indeed, of a high standard. It seems that the magazine folded around 1906. After that, Mrs Bowles contributed some articles for *The Chess Amateur*, launched in October 1906. The *British Chess Magazine* tells us about a living chess game in 1903 between the strong English player, Henry Lewis Bowles, and the American champion and victor of Hastings 1895, Harry Nelson Pillsbury. Bowles, better known as H.L. Bowles, was the husband of Rhoda Bowles.

An eye witness report follows: "A highly-successful exhibition of Living Chess was given at the Borough Road Polytechnic, London, on Saturday, November 29th. The proceedings were started by young men of the gymnasium, who, to military drill, plaited the board with alternate strips of crimson and white material. This was



Ada S. Ballin got Rhoda A Bowles to write a chess column for the illustrated monthly, *Womanhood*, that appeared in December 1898

followed by the entrance of the living pieces, who advanced one at a time on either side of the board to their respective places, being accompanied by appropriate selections on the pianoforte by Dr Elwyn Lewis, hon. sec. Kent County Chess Association. The costumes and mounting of the pieces were highly creditable to Messrs. C & W. May, who supervised this part of the arrangements. Particularly conspicuous were the two Queens. Mrs. H. N. Pillsbury represented the Black Queen in crimson velvet and gold, and Mrs. Rhoda A. Bowles the White Queen resplendent in silver and gold."

It seems that the great Pillsbury, who dominated the strongest tournament ever staged until that time, Hastings 1895, was a loyal supporter of Rhoda Bowles, and performed everything within his powers to endorse and magnify her efforts to promote chess. Rhoda was born in 1861 and died in 1931. The 1932 issue of the *BCM* had this to say:

The Metropolitan Chess Club has sustained a heavy loss by the death early in December of Mrs. Rhoda Bowles. She had been a vice-president and staunch supporter of the club for a generation. At one time she was secretary of the Ladies' Chess Club, and ran a successful and informative column

in "Womanhood". A great organiser, she ran the Ladies' International Tournament of 1897, and together with her husband, the late H.L. Bowles, conducted a series of matches between the English and American Universities. It was, in fact, her husband who taught her chess, in the course of a long illness. In June last she was involved in a serious motor accident, and her death must be attributed to injuries then received.

The *BCM* gave another account of Mrs. Bowles in 1900: "Mrs. Rhoda A. Bowles.—Among the new chess columns we have received during the past year, that started in *Womanhood*, in February last, is now always certain of hearty welcome to our table; not only on account of the literally ability of its conductor, but also because of her charming personality and the influence for good she wields in the London chess world. Mrs. Rhoda A. Bowles or, "Little Mother," as she is affectionately called by her intimate chess friends, has, in the short space of four years, compiled such a remarkable record as an organiser that we take special pleasure in referring to her achievements in the pages of the "*B.C.M.*" All well informed chess votaries know that Mrs. Bowles is the life and soul of the now famous Ladies' Chess Club, but few know how she became acquainted with chess. The

story is a pretty one. Mrs. Bowles tells us that it was entirely through her husband's love of chess that she, under his tuition, learnt to play. At tennis, billiards, &c., they could play together. Chess she deemed quite beyond a woman's powers; but nature subsequently came to her aid. After a few years of married life she was seized with a terrible illness, and was almost blind for three weeks, during which period I had, she says,—to be amused in some way. “My dear husband read to me until I tired of that, then the brilliant idea struck him that he might teach me the ‘names’ of the chess pieces by ‘touch’—for my eyes were bandaged night and day—this interested me greatly, and by the time that I had learnt the names and how to move the pieces, the shield could be lifted from my eyes sufficiently for me to see the 64 squares, and by the time of my convalescence I could move each piece correctly.

“Then came my eagerness to play a game! Oh the pleasure of it! No woman can realize until she has faced her husband on what she thinks the highest pinnacle beyond her. Of course I never stood a chance of winning, but the pleasure was to be in the same ‘running’; to try, now that I was on the track, to perfect my speed—in other words play—until I could catch him up. I haven’t done this yet, but I sometimes trap him, and have the pleasure of hearing him say ‘well-played’.”

After her recovery Mrs. Bowles became one of a coterie of ladies who met every week at each others houses to play chess; but finding there was a natural feeling of diffidence to this system Mrs. Bowles advocated, and was chiefly instrumental in securing, a small room at Charing Cross. Lady Newnes was invited to become president, and gladly consented; Mrs. Bowles was the first match captain and tournament secretary of the club, and was shortly after elected secretary and treasurer, and here, with the modest annual subscription of 5/–, was practically started the now famous Ladies’ Chess Club. The



A. Bowles dressed as a White Queen during a performance of a play which featured a chess theme

esprit de corps now manifest in the club could be traced largely to the indefatigable energy and exceptional organising powers of Mrs. Bowles, whose efforts were so highly appreciated by her fellow members that they presented to her in 1896 a beautiful writing table as a slight token of regard. By this time the club membership had risen to over 100, and yet the ambition of the “Little Mother” was not satisfied.

She had long thought that an International Tournament for Ladies would be a fitting event to be held during the Diamond Jubilee year of our Queen's (Queen Victoria's) reign. Indeed so far back as Whitsuntide, 1896, Mrs. Bowles had sought the opinion of several influential friends, whose encouragement was further emphasised by Sir George Newnes, who generously gave £60 for the first prize. The tournament was played in London; lasted a fortnight, from June 23rd, 1897, and proved a huge success—no less than 20 Ladies from all parts of the world competing for the prizes—the aggregate value of which amounted to some £250!

The competitors came from Canada, New York, Germany, France, &c. Miss Rudge (England) proved to be the champion player and took first prize. Mrs. Worrall took the fourth prize to America, and received a great ovation. After the tournament the competitors marked their indebtedness to Mrs. Bowles by giving her a beautiful gold bracelet, with a gold chess Queen as pendant. We have long held the opinion that the officials of chess clubs devote too little attention to the social side of the game; and the wonderful successes achieved by Mrs. Bowles confirm our opinions.

Every year the birthday of the Ladies' Club is honoured at a delightful re-union party, the fifth of which was given last month. We also learn from the February issue of *Womanhood* that the new quarters lent themselves capitably for the occasion, and the brightness of the rooms was enhanced by the scarlet and white (the Ladies' Chess Club colours) of the beautiful flowers which were prettily arranged about them.

The gold medal, which was given as a brilliancy prize by the Ladies' Chess Club, and won by Herr Lasker in the recent (1899) London International Tournament, fully inscribed with the winner's name, was handed around for his many admirers to see before posting it off to Herr Lasker, who is at present in Berlin.

We congratulate Mrs. Bowles most heartily on the success which has attended her efforts on behalf of the club for which she has done so much, and we hope that the members will continue to enjoy, for many years to come, the pleasures which arise from her arduous labours in their behalf." Meanwhile, we read from the *BCM*, 1902: "On March 26th the Cambridge University Chess Club concluded its annual Metropolitan chess tour with the return match against a team of ladies, captained by Mrs. Rhoda Bowles, chess editor of *Womanhood*. At the call of time the unfinished games were adjudicated by Mr. Pillsbury, who then gave the assembled

company several remarkable illustrations of his mental powers. The first illustration was the placing of a Knight upon any of the squares of the chessboard that the company might select, and then, without sight of the board, Mr. Pillsbury rapidly dictated move after move by which the Knight, without covering any one square twice, covered each one of the sixty-four squares in turn. In the next illustration a pack of cards was shuffled and about twenty dealt out, each card being called. Mr. Pillsbury not seeing the cards simply listened, and then rapidly and accurately called off all the remaining cards that had not been dealt. Then a list of thirty words and names, some of them most fantastic, were written down by the company, and after the list had been read over he answered correctly all enquiries as to what name appeared against particular numbers and vice versa, and then in conclusion gave the whole list backwards in proper order. These feats were all accomplished by memorising efforts alone, and bear striking testimony to the remarkable development of his mental powers, which have already become world-famous by his successful achievement of twenty games of chess played *sans voir*."

In its review of the 1897 Ladies' International Chess Congress, the *BCM* wrote:

"Mrs. Bowles (hon. sec. of the Ladies' Chess Club) has rendered a great service to the cause of chess by organising this splendid Tournament. It is less than five years ago that enforced leisure, consequent upon the recovering from an illness, afforded her the opportunity of learning the moves of chess, and having mastered the elementary principles, she became at once a great enthusiast of the game. She joined the Ladies' Chess Club, then newly formed, and at once took an active part in its development. For the past two years she has been either its match captain, its secretary, or its treasurer, occupying indeed all three positions for the last twelve months. The members of the club are so perfectly satisfied with her labours on their



Upper row (from left to right): Madame Marie Bonnefin, Miss Alice E. Hooke, Miss G. Watson, Miss Eliza M. Thorold, Miss Forbes-Sharp;
 Second row: Miss Mary Rudge, Miss Kate B. Finn, Mrs. Anna S. Stevenson, Madame de la Vingne, Miss A.M. Gooding, Miss Müller-Hartung, Mrs. F. Sterling Berry;
 Third row: Miss Gertrude Field, Mrs. Harriet J. Worrall, Mrs. Rhoda A. Bowles, Lady Edith M. Thomas, Mrs. Louisa M. Fagan;
 Fourth row: Miss Rita Fox, Miss Anna Hertzsch, Miss Eschwege, Mrs. E.H. Sidney

behalf that they have left her no alternative but to continue her work, though the task is almost beyond her strength.

We have already referred to her inception of the idea of a Jubilee International Ladies' Tournament, but the amount of work she has got through in carrying her idea into effect is simply prodigious. Not less than 2,000 letters have been written by her own hand during the last twelve months in connection with the Tournament, and this in addition to her other chess work. She is full of good chess ideas, and has played many bright games, but her opportunities for actual play are restricted, owing to the pressure of her chess work in organising and managing the club and the Tournament. We heartily congratulate Mrs. Bowles on the success of her spirited endeavours to prove that women can play chess. We delight in every forward movement of the game, and we are sure that the arousing

of feminine interest in chess will tend to keep many a male chess votary true to his love for the game, who under other circumstances might have passed out of the ranks.

The Tournament has been held, it has been a success, and it marks an epoch in the game, and we dare to say will not be the last of its kind. In planning, organising, and carrying out this unique chess tournament, Mrs. Bowles has done a good service to the game."

The following is a good specimen of Mrs. Bowles lively style of play:

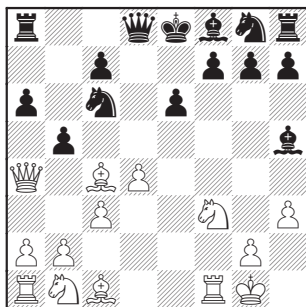
Mrs. Rhoda Bowles vs. Amateur

1897

1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.f3 exf3 4.♘xf3 ♘c6
 5.c3 ♙g4 ...Always a loss of time in this and analogous positions.

6.♙c4 e6 7.0-0 a6 ...Again loss of time.

8.h3 ♘h5 9.♖a4 b5



10.♙xb5 ♙xf3 Here 10. ...axb5 should have been played, then if 11.♖xb5 ♙xf3, and Black has a piece for two pawns.

11.♙xc6+ ♙xc6 12.♖xc6+ ♔e7
13.♙g5+ ♜f6 14.♜d2 ♖b8 15.♜c4 ♗d7
16.♜e5 ♗d6 17.♖f3 ♔e8 18.♙xf6 gxf6
19.♖xf6

1-0

Here is the record of Rhoda Bowles' supreme organisational triumph:

FIRST INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT FOR LADIES, LONDON, 1897

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
1 Rudge	•	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	+	1	18½
2 Fagan	0	•	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	½	1	1	1	+	1	15½
3 Thorold	0	0	•	1	1	1	1	½	0	0	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	14
4 Worrall	0	0	0	•	1	1	0	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	+	1	13
5 Bonnefin	½	0	0	0	•	1	½	½	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	+	1	½	1	12½
6 Berry	0	0	0	0	0	•	0	1	0	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	+	1	+	1	11½
7 Thomas	0	0	0	1	½	1	•	0	1	1	½	1	0	0	1	½	1	1	+	1	11½
8 Field	0	0	½	½	½	0	1	•	0	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	11
9 Watson	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	•	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	½	+	1	10½
10 Gooding	0	0	1	½	0	0	0	½	0	•	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	+	1	10½
11 Sidney	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	1	½	•	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
12 Hooke	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	•	0	1	1	1	+	1	+	1	10
13 Fox	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	1	1	•	0	1	1	1	1	+	1	9
14 Hertzsch	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	1	0	1	•	1	1	1	0	+	0	8½
15 Eschwege	0	½	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	•	1	0	½	+	1	6
16 Müller-Hartung	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	•	1	1	0	1	5½
17 de la Vingne	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	1	0	0	0	-	0	0	1	0	•	0	1	1	4
18 Forbes-Sharp	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	1	•	0	1	4
19 Finn	-	-	0	-	½	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	1	0	1	•	1	3½
20 Stevenson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	•	1

Although Vera Menchik is officially credited as the first women's world chess champion, in a title dating to the 1920's, it is completely clear to me that London 1897 should be recognised as the first such championship. Furthermore, the organisational exertions of Rhoda Bowles should be honoured and Mary Rudge acknowledged as the first women's world champion. Similarly the overall championship officially continues to exclude such obvious wielders of the global sceptre as Philidor, Labourdonnais, Staunton, Anderssen, Morphy, while failing to recognise the claims of Steinitz going back to 1866, as he himself claimed. The time has come to set the record right.

I am indebted to my sister, the historian Professor Jackie Eales, who published the following extract in *BCM*.

The 1897 tournament excited both a great deal of interest and a great deal of initial criticism. Staunch adversaries of women's chess suggested that the tournament would be a farce, not merely because of the lower standard of play amongst women, but also because the players would collapse with "nervous strain" at having to play two rounds a day for ten days.

The "nervous strain" argument was of course a well-known jibe trotted out by Victorian paternalists whenever women showed any sign of climbing out of their crinolines and attempting to challenge the established order of male superiority. In the 1870s the very same argument had been used against women sitting for university exams, on the grounds that the strain would result in a breakdown in the health of the aspiring female graduates.

Despite the antagonism engendered by the idea, the Secretary of the London Club, Rhoda Bowles, persevered with the organisation of the tournament, which attracted twenty entries, representing Canada, the United States, Germany, Italy, Belgium, France England, Ireland and Scotland.

The organisation of this tournament marked a changing point in women's chess; thereafter women's tournaments and championships became an accepted feature of chess life.

The increased acceptance of women's participation in organised chess was the result of the efforts of the women themselves and a number of individual Victorian players and problemists deserve greater attention.

*Mary Rudge (6 February 1845 - December 1919), the winner of the London 1897 tournament, was one of the first women to take up chess as a competitive sport. She started playing at the Counties Congress in 1874, when she took second place in the Class II competition. By 1878 she had earned the reputation of being the best woman player in England, although she never progressed past the point of being a strong second class player. The greatest success of Mary Rudge's chess playing career was undoubtedly her victory at the 1897 tournament, but only highlights of her games in this tournament were published in *BCM* of that year, who waited for her opponents to make mistakes which she exploited methodically.*

The runner-up to Mary Rudge in the London 1897 tournament was L. Mathilda Fagan (9 January 1850 - 11 August 1931). She was unusual among women chess players of the Victorian era because she was one of the very few who was active in the women's emancipation movement. In 1875 a number of her problems appeared in the City of London Chess Magazine under her nom de plume of 'Deesa'. In 1882 she won the Chess Tournament of the Bombay Sports Club, although she was very nearly disqualified before the tournament started because she was a woman.

And for the following, we are indebted to GM Susan Polgar, from her comments

online via X, formerly Twitter. It is astonishing to see that the prejudice which was alive and well in 1882 in Bombay, was still flourishing in Budapest over a century later.

Between April and May of 1986, I participated in the Hungarian National Championship in Budapest. Going into the tournament, all participants were told the rules, and that the top 3 finishers would qualify to play in the “Men’s” World Championship Zonal Tournament. I had just turned 17 right before the tournament and until then, people would not even think about a woman qualifying for the “Men’s” World Championship.

But I was brought up differently by my parents. I was taught that I could accomplish anything I want if I put in the hard work. I had put in a lot of hard work since I had been 4 or 5. Unfortunately, I was not told that as a young woman and Jew, I would be black-listed. By the time my younger sisters had begun to play serious chess, my battles had cleared the way for them.

The unexpected of course happened. Knowing that I needed to finish in the top 3 to achieve the unthinkable, I paced myself to accomplish just that. I finished tied for 2nd with IM Laszlo Hazai, behind Grandmaster Ivan Farago. I was very happy of what I have accomplished. I had qualified for the “Men’s World Chess Championship” cycle. But the happy moment quickly turned sour. Many people were not happy. The Hungarian Chess Federation changed the rules and announced that only the top two would represent Hungary instead of the top three.

No problem, I said to myself. So we will have a play-off between IM Hazai and me and the winner will move on. Wrong! The decision was made. Susan Polgar is not going to the “Men’s World Championship” cycle no matter what. IM

Hazai will represent Hungary and that was final.

After I legitimately qualified and broke the gender barrier, I learned rules can be changed at any time (especially if you are a young Jewish woman). To add more insult to injury, FIDE also refused to allow me to participate in the “Men’s World Championship” Zonal tournament. The reason? The word “Men’s Championship” speaks for itself.

Dr Laszlo Lako of Hungary stated that he would not allow Susan Polgar or any other Hungarian women to play in the “Men’s World Chess Championship” Zonal tournament even if FIDE would have agreed to let me play. The Hungarian federation and FIDE succeeded in stopping me from participating even though I had earned my spot. However, they could not stop women forever. They had to eventually change the name to the World Chess Championship in the following cycle and the word ‘Men’ was FINALLY removed.

Fortunately, my loss was a gain for women in chess. Now, all women can compete in the overall World Chess Championship. Someday, hopefully another woman can break through the next barrier and win it all. But in the meantime, I am very proud to be able to chisel through the wall of gender discrimination in chess for future generations. I am happy to see so many good women players from around the world. I hope this trend will continue.”

Here, as a postscript, is a much more recent female triumph over Grandmaster Mickey Adams, who seldom loses a game against anyone: Nurgyul Salimova vs. Michael Adams.

This piece by Ray Keene originally appeared in The Article on June 1 and is republished here with this permission.

Openings

for Amateurs

By Pete Tamburro; ptamburro@aol.com



Attacking patterns out of your Openings (Part III)

This game reminds us of two fundamental principles. One is the necessity for learning the basic technical knowledge of chess: rook and pawn endings, king and pawn endings, techniques for winning material, attacking a king that castled, attacking a king that isn't castled, etc. The other principle is that you must, at the board, have a thinking process routine on every move so you don't overlook opportunities when they arise - for you or your opponent. These two players are masters. One missed a fatal attacking move that if you gave

him as a position and said, "Black to Play and Win," he would have found it. A little research revealed it was even worse than that! However, there is nobody whispering that in your ear during a game. You have to be aware of those possibilities for whatever opening you study. Take a look...

Ahn – Ruck, T

Belgique, 2007

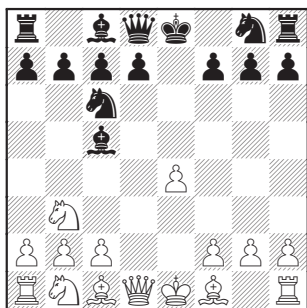
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♗xd4 ♙c5 The classical answer.

The other best answer is 4...♗f6 which has a body of theory larger than our game line. Lots of chances for both sides;

A bit nuts is Steinitz's 4...♔h4 but then he did his share of weird moves in the opening

as if he wanted to flaunt disrespect for opening principles. A solid approach to deal with it is 5.♘c3 ♘b4 6.♙e2 ♗xe4 7.♘db5 ♙xc3+ 8.bxc3! ♕d8 9.0-0± where the doubled c-pawns are offset by White's two bishops, castled king and coming seizure of the e-file with Black's queen and king having to wonder where they will have to go next.

5.♘b3



5.♙e3 ♗f6 (*Lasker's move, 5...♙b6 doesn't seem to do well against 6.♘f5! ♗f6 (6...d5 7.♘g7+ ♕f8 8.♘h5 ♙xe3 9.fxe3 ♗h4+ 10.♘g3 ♘f6 (If 10...dxe4 11.♙e2 ♗g5 12.0-0 ♗xe3+ 13.♕h1 ♙e6 14.♘c3 ♙d8 15.♗e1 and the contrast between the opposing kings' locations tells you all you need to know.) 11.exd5 ♘g4 12.♗f3±) 7.♙xb6 axb6 8.♘c3 ♘ge7 9.♘e3 d6 10.♙b5±) 6.c3 ♘ge7 7.♙c4 d6= (7...♘e5 8.♙e2 ♗g6=);*

Lots of kids get taught their first zwischenzug here with 5.♘xc6 ♗f6!

5...♙b6 6.♘c3 Once all the rage, and recommended by Botterill and Harding (The Scotch, 1977) was 6.a4 a6! It was unnecessary to concede the b5 square with a5. 7.♘c3 ♘f6 "As might be expected, this leads to a livelier game..." Botterill and Harding. 8.♘d3 (8.♙g5 d6 9.a5 (9.♗e2 h6 10.♙e3 ♙xe3 11.♗xe3 ♙e6=; 9.♘d5?? ♙xf2+ 10.♕xf2 ♘xe4+ 11.♕g1 ♘xg5 12.h4 ♘e6+) 9...♙a7 10.♗f3 ♘e5=) 8...d6 9.♙g5 h6 10.♙h4 ♙e6

(10...g5! 11.♙g3 ♙e6 12.h4 ♙g8 13.a5 ♙a7 14.hxg5 hxg5 15.♗d2 ♗e7 16.0-0-0 0-0-0) 11.♘d5 ♙xd5 12.exd5 ♘e5=;

White can give himself the option of castling queenside with the bishop-blocking move. It's OK here because of the lock on d5 long castling gives and alternate route at g2 for the bishop. 6.♗e2 ♘f6 7.♘c3 0-0 8.♙g5 ♘d4 9.♗d2 ♘xb3 10.axb3 ♙e8 11.0-0-0 h6 12.h4 d6 13.♙c4 (13.f3 hxg5 14.hxg5 ♘h7 15.f4 ♘xg5! 16.♙d3 ♘e6 17.g3 c6 18.♕b1 ♙d4 19.e5!? (19.♙c4! ♙xc3 20.bxc3 b5 21.♙d3 ♕f8 22.g4 ♘c5 23.f5 ♘xd3 24.♗xd3 ♗f6 25.e5! ♗xe5 26.♗d2 ♙xf5 27.gxf5 ♗f6 28.c4 ♙ac8 29.♙h8+ ♙e7 30.♗e3+ ♗e5 31.f6+ gxf6 32.♗xa7+ ♙e6 33.♙xe8+ ♙xe8 34.c5!±) 19...dxe5 20.f5 ♘c7 21.g4 ♙xc3 22.bxc3 f6) 13...♙e6 (*An utterly brilliant attack comes if Black takes the knight: 13...hxg5 14.hxg5 ♘xe4 15.g6!! ♘xd2 16.♙xf7+ ♕f8 17.♘d5! ♘xb3+ 18.♕b1! (18.cxb3?? ♗g5+ 19.f4 (19.♙d2 ♗h6+) 19...♙e3+ 20.♘xe3 ♗c5+ 21.♕d2 ♗xe3+-) 14.♙xe6 ♙xe6 15.f3 ♙a5 16.♙e3=.*

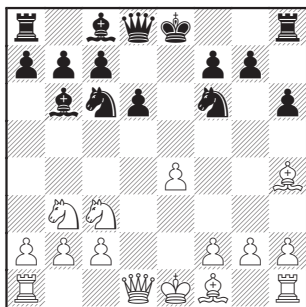
6...♘f6 6...d6 7.♙f4 ♘f6 8.♗d2 ♘g4 9.♙g3 f5 10.exf5 0-0 11.0-0-0 ♙xf5 (11...♙xf5 12.♘d5 ♙xf2 13.♙xf2 ♙xc2! 14.♙g3 ♙xd1 15.♙xd1 ♘c5 16.♙c1±) 12.♙c4+ ♕h8= This is another aspect of the Open Games: there are a good many playable lines with lots of variations; however, this is true of most chess openings. The key is to play through the lines several times and understand the ideas that evolve and pick the ones that you are most comfortable in understanding.

7.♙g5 7.♗e2 as noted above was a better chance;

When White played 7.♙d3 Wei played a rather ironic move: 7...a5 and drew;

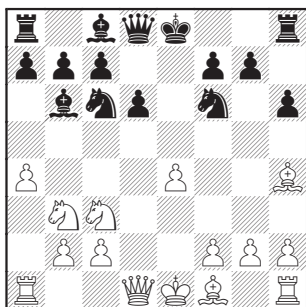
Little known but playable is 7.♙c4 0-0= (Or 7...h6 8.a4 a6 9.♙f4 d6=) 8.0-0 h6.

7...h6 8.♙h4 d6



This modest, innocent-looking move contains a threat to win the game! If you have the White pieces, you have to be alert to it. Do you see how d6 changed the position and initiated a threat?

9.a4??



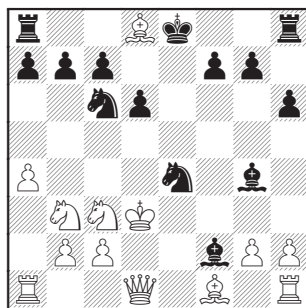
White misses the threat. It's a very old theme (♠xf2/f7+ before the king is castled) and yet it's missed by a master. There were two ways to avoid the carnage that follows: 9.f3 ♠e6 10.♠b5 0-0 11.♠xc6 bxc6 12.♠e2 a5 13.♠a4 ♠a7 14.0-0-0 ♠b8 15.♠xf6 gxf6 16.♠c3 ♠b6 17.♠d2 ♠g7 18.♠hf1 ♠fb8 19.f4 ♠e3 20.♠xa5 ♠xd2+ 21.♠xd2 f5 22.♠xc6 ♠xb2=; and 9.♠c4 ♠e5 10.♠e2 ♠xc4 11.♠xc4 ♠e6 12.♠e2=.

9...♠xe4!! Of the TEN games in the database only one other person other than Ruck found ♠xe4! The favourite was 9...g5. This goes back to basic chess lessons for beginners, and yet a 2200 and a 2500

ignored rule number one: on every move look at all checks, captures and forced moves...and f2 (or f7) of all places when there's an uncastled king.

10.♠xd8 10.♠h5 g6 11.♠xd8 gxh5 12.♠h4 ♠xc3 13.bxc3 a5+.

10...♠xf2+ 11.♠e2 ♠g4+ 12.♠d3



12...♠e5+!! The only move for Black and yet the winning move. Black demonstrates the key understanding in this type of position: get the hunted king up the board and into the open. Please note that this is a minor piece attack!

13.♠xe4 f5+ Also forced and yet forcing. The aspiring student should go back to the Nx4 diagram and figure the whole line out in your brain.

14.♠d5 Cute is 14.♠f4 ♠g6#.

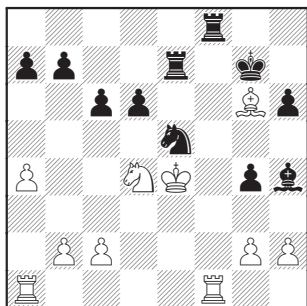
14...♠xd8 15.♠xg4 c6+ 16.♠e6 0-0!! Sure, you can take the queen, but you don't have to! Calmly castling testifies to the overwhelming Black position. It must have been fun to play.

17.♠d5 The game is over as even escaping with the queen ends badly for her husband. 17.♠e2 ♠f6+ 18.♠e7 ♠d7+ 19.♠e8 ♠f8#.

17...fxg4 18.♠d3 g6 Wants to eliminate f5 as an escape square so Black can play ♠fe8; however, ♠de8+ would lead to forced mate. Check it out.

19.♖hf1 ♔g7 20.♘d4 ♖fe8+ 21.♗e7
♙h4 22.♙xg6 ♖xe7+ Now it's a forced
mate again.

23.♙f5 ♖f8+ 24.♙e4



24...♗xg6+ And it's missed again. An
aesthetic flaw for the game, but the whole
concept was quite impressive. 24...d5+!
25.♙e3 ♗c4+ 26.♙d3 ♖e3#.

25.♙d3 ♗e5+ 26.♙c3 ♙f2 OK, White has
had enough - finally!

0-1

This game is such a perfect lesson for all of
us. On every move of every game, we have
to pay attention. We have to go through a
thinking routine. When I put 20 ways to raise
your rating without studying the openings in
Openings for Amateurs - Next Steps, I would
be happy if amateurs just went through the first
four, because I see so many amateur games
decided by not considering these check offs.

White in our game didn't consider the sacrifice
on f2. If you recall all those Nimzoindian traps
I covered in the March 2020 BCM, you might
remember the title: It also might help amateurs
to completely review Renaud and Kahn's
Art of the Checkmate or a comprehensive
tactics book that teaches the theme ideas for
the tactics in the book. And, when you study
the various openings in your repertoire, you
should be aware of the attacking possibilities
for both sides in the evolving positions.

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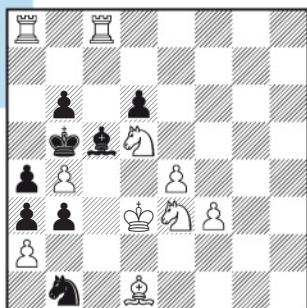
PROBLEM WORLD

by Christopher Jones

cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk

Grandmaster of Chess Composition

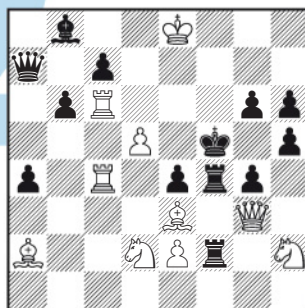
Solutions are given on page 446



Kabe Moen (USA)

Mate in 2

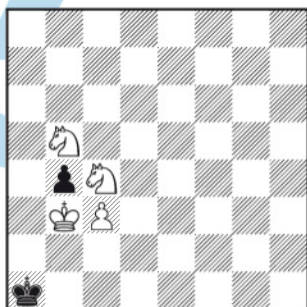
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Sergey I. Tkachenko and
Leonid Lyubashevsky (Ukraine/Israel)

Mate in 3

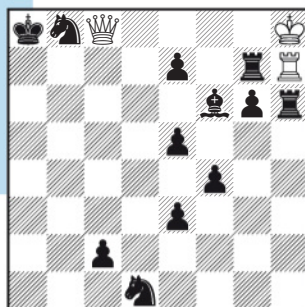
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Udo Marks (Germany)

Mate in 7

ORIGINAL



Ljubomir Ugren (Slovenia)

Helpmate in 2 - 7 solutions

ORIGINAL

BEST GAMES FROM THE EUROPEAN SENIOR TEAMS

IN THE JUNE ISSUE WE REPORTED ON THEIR SPECTACULAR SUCCESS, TAKING THE TITLE IN BOTH THE OVER-50 AND OVER-65 CATEGORIES. NOW WE TAKE A DEEP DIVE INTO THE BEST GAMES THE ENGLISH SENIORS PLAYED IN SLOVENIA!

By IM Shaun Taulbut

The England teams were very successful in the European Senior Team Championships winning three team gold medals; the results were given in the June 2024 BCM and now we look at some of the games.

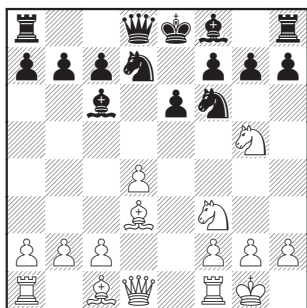
In the Over 65 Peter Large had a sparkling win over 80 year old Heikki Westerinen.

Peter Large - Heikki Westerinen

TCh-EUR Senior +65 2024 Catez SLO (7.3)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.c3 cxd4 4.♘xe4 ♙d7
Black aims to post the Queen-bishop on c6 outside the pawn chain, a solid line but has the drawback of giving White a lead in development.

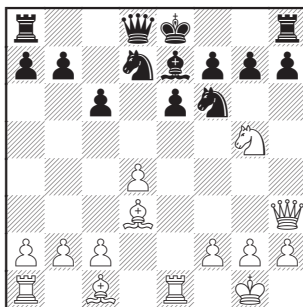
5.♘f3 ♙c6 6.♙d3 ♘d7 7.0-0 ♘g6
8.♘eg5



8...♙xf3 8...h6 allows a dangerous piece sacrifice 9.♘xe6 fxe6 10.♙g6+ ♔e7 11.♖e1 ♘b6 12.♘e5 ♗d5 13.f3 White has good attacking chances for White.

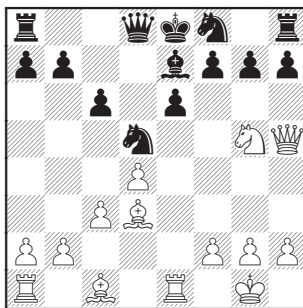
9.♗xf3 c6 Again if 9...h6 10.♘xe6 fxe6 11.♙g6+ ♔e7 12.♖e1 ♘b6 13.♗xb7 with good compensation for the piece.

10.♖e1 ♙e7 11.♗h3



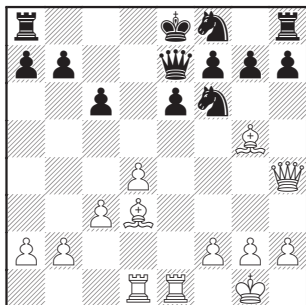
11...♘f8 Black protects e6; If 11...h6 12.♘xf7 ♔xf7 13.♗xe6+ ♔f8 14.♙g6 is winning.

12.c3 ♘d5 13.♗h5



13...♙xg5 13...g6 14.♗h6 ♙f6 15.♘e4 with strong play for White on the weakened dark squares on the Black kingside.

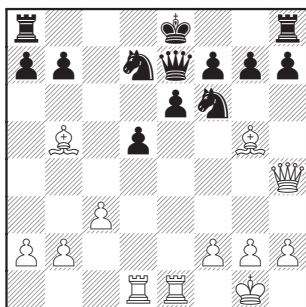
14. ♖xg5 ♖d7 15. ♖ad1 ♜f6 16. ♗h4 ♗e7



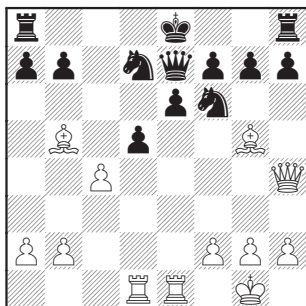
White has a big advantage in development and now breaks open the position with pawn sacrifices to attack the uncastled Black king.

17. d5 cxd5 17... ♖d8 18. dxe6 ♜xe6 19. f4 ♗c5+ 20. ♖h1 White has a decisive attack.

18. ♖b5+ ♜8d7



19. c4

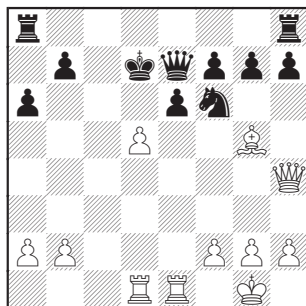


19... a6 The alternatives were also grim 19... 0-0 20. cxd5 e5; 19... 0-0 20. ♖xd7 ♗xd7 21. ♖xf6 gxf6 22. ♖e3 winning;

19... ♖d8 20. cxd5 e5 21. d6 ♗e6 22. f4 e4 23. f5 ♗e5 24. ♖xf6 ♗xf6 25. ♗xe4+ ♖f8 26. ♗e7+ winning.

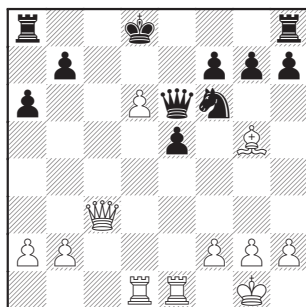
20. ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 If 20... ♗xd7 21. ♖xf6 gxf6 22. ♗xf6 is winning.

21. cxd5



The black king is trapped in the centre.

21... e5 22. ♗h3+ ♖d8 23. d6 ♗e6 24. ♗c3



As well as the threat of ♗c7+, White also threatens ♗a5+ followed by ♖xe5 so Black resigned

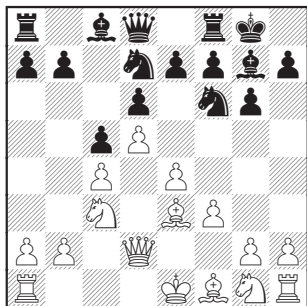
1-0

John Nunn scored a number of wins, his tactical mastery showing through in these two games; we start with a Kings Indian.

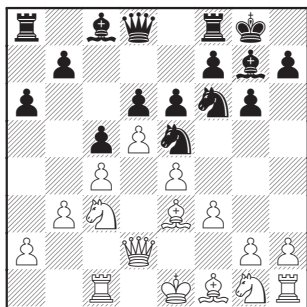
Gisela Fischdick - John Nunn

TCh-EUR Senior +65 2024 Catez SLO (1.1)

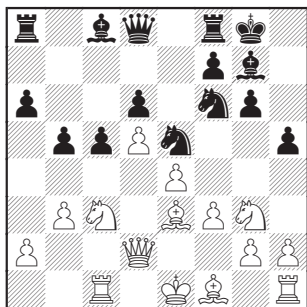
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♔g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3
0-0 6.♙e3 ♘bd7 7.♚d2 c5 8.d5



8...♘e5 9.b3 a6 10.♖c1 e6



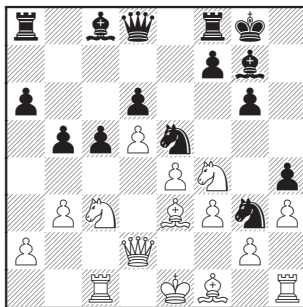
11.♘ge2 exd5 12.cxd5 b5 13.♘g3 h5



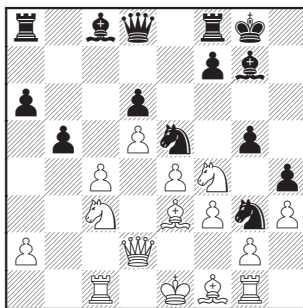
14.h3 If 14.h4 ♘h7 (threatening...♙f6) 15.♘ge2
b4 16.♘d1 a5 planning ...a4 is good for Black.

14...h4 15.♘ge2 ♘h5 16.♘f4 If 16.f4 ♘d7
is good for Black.

16...♘g3

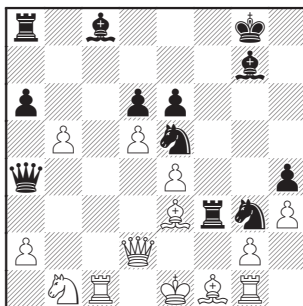


17.♖g1 c4 18.bxc4 g5



19.♘e6 If 19.♘fe2 ♘xc4 20.♙xg5
(20.♚d3 ♘xe3 21.♚xe3 ♙e5 is good for
Black) 20...f6 is strong.

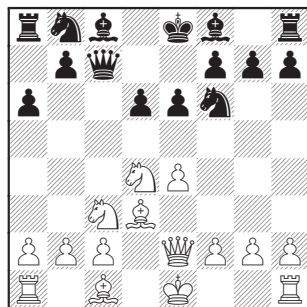
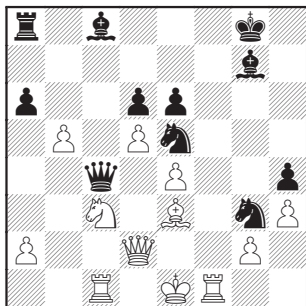
19...fxe6 20.♙xg5 ♚b6 21.♙e3 ♚a5
22.♘b1 ♚a4 23.cxb5 ♖xf3



A tactical breakthrough, because of the knight fork Black wins a pawn.

24.♘c3 ♖xf1+ 25.♖xf1 ♜c4

Black has two threats; the rook on f1 and a deadly knight fork on d3 so White resigned.



8.g4 ♘fd7 9.♗d2 ♗e7 10.0-0 ♘e5
10...♘c6 is a good alternative as the White knight on d4 is not defended and White has to respond. Now White chooses to give up his bishop relying on his lead in development.

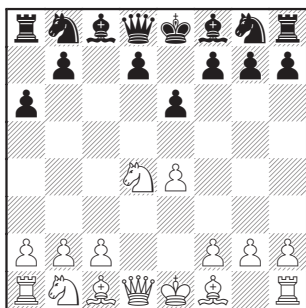
0-1 11.f4 ♘xd3+ 12.♜xd3 ♗d7

In the game against Antunac, John Nunn offered a piece sacrifice in a Sicilian.

John Nunn – Goran Antunac

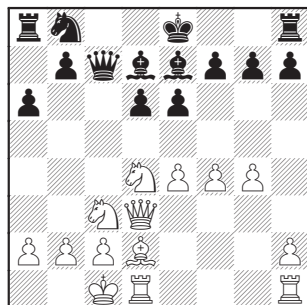
TCh-EUR Senior +65 2024 Catez SLO (9.1)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 a6



5.♗c3 ♜c7 6.♗d3 ♘f6 7.♜e2 d6

White has an advantage in development and now starts a typical pawn thrust to disrupt Black.



Now White plays a typical piece sacrifice which is difficult to defend against in practice.

13.♘f5 13.f5 is a good alternative here.

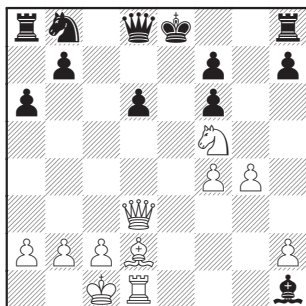
13...exf5 14.♘d5 14...♜d8 Black could play 14...♜c6 when 15.exf5 ♗d8 16.♜h1+ ♘f8 17.♗c3 gives White strong play for the piece.

15.exf5 Also possible was 15.gxf5 0-0 16.♜hg1 ♘c6 17.♗c3 f6.

15...♗c6 15...0-0 16.g5 with active play for White.

16. ♖xe7 ♙xh1 17.f6 gxf6 17...g6 18. ♖xh1 ♜c6 19. ♚e1 ♜f8 20. ♚d5 is horrible for Black.

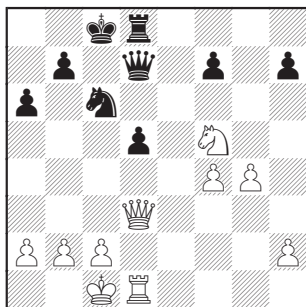
18. ♖f5



18... ♜c6 After 18... ♜c6 19. ♙a5 ♚xa5 (19...b6 20. ♙xb6 ♚d7 21. ♚e2+ ♜f8 22. ♙xd6 wins) 20. ♙xd6 Black cannot prevent checkmate so he must give back the bishop and evacuate his king.

19. ♖xh1 ♚d7 20. ♙c3 0-0-0 21. ♙xf6 White regains the sacrificed material when he has a solid extra pawn.

21... ♖he8 22. ♖d1 d5 23. ♙xd8 ♖xd8



24. a3 d4 25. ♖e1 ♜c7 26. ♜b1 ♖e8 27. ♖xe8 ♚xe8 28. ♜xd4 ♜xd4 29. ♚xd4 ♚e1+ 30. ♜a2 ♚e6+ 31. b3 ♚xg4 32. ♚c4+ ♜b8 33. ♚xf7 White has a decisive advantage.

33...h5 34. ♚f8+ ♜a7 35. ♚c5+ ♜a8 36. f5 ♚f4 37. h3 h4 38. ♜b2 ♚f3 39. ♚c3 ♚xf5 40. ♚h8+ ♜a7 41. ♚d4+ ♜a8 42. ♚xh4

♚e5+ 43. ♜b1 a5 44. a4 ♜a7 45. ♚c4 White is winning as the h-pawn will advance and Black cannot stop the pawn with his queen alone.

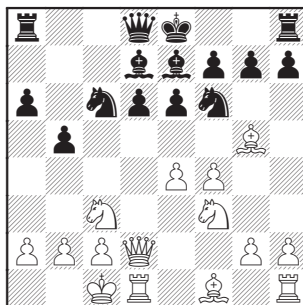
1-0

Now from the over 50s a win by Stuart Conquest

George Neave – Stuart Conquest

TCh-EUR Senior +50 2024 Catez SLO (1.4)

1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♜f6 5. ♜c3 ♜c6 6. ♙g5 e6 7. ♚d2 a6 8. 0-0-0 ♜d7 9. f4 ♙e7 10. ♖f3 b5



A typical Richer Rauzer position

11. ♙xf6 If 11. e5 b4 12. exf6 bxc3 13. ♚xc3 gxf6 is satisfactory so White forces the doubled pawns.

11...gxf6 12. f5 ♚a5 13. ♜b1 h5 Gaining spacing on the kingside and preventing the White queen from coming to h6.

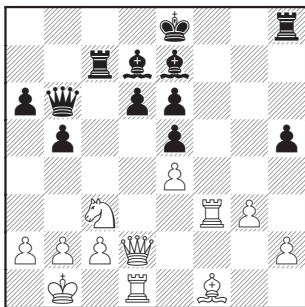
14. g3 ♜e5 14...0-0-0 is also playable.

15. ♖xe5 fxe5 16. ♙h3 Perhaps best is 16. fxe6 fxe6 17. ♙d3.

16... ♖c8 17. ♖hf1 ♚b6 18. ♖f3 18. ♜e2 Moving the knight away before Black advances with ...b4 is safer.

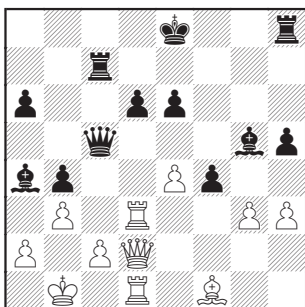
18... ♖c4 18...b4 19. ♜e2 ♚b7 is slightly better for Black.

19.fxe6 fxe6 20.♙f1 ♖c7



21.h3 b4 22.♘e2 ♙c6 23.♖e3 ♙a4
23...♙g5 is not possible because of
24.♙xd6 ♙xe3 25.♙xe6+ so Black moves
the queenbishop attacking c2.

24.b3 ♙g5 25.♘f4 exf4 26.♖d3 ♙c5



27.gxf4 ♙xf4 28.♙xf4 ♙xc2+ 29.♙a1
♙xb3 30.♙d2 30.axb3 ♖c5 31.♖d5 exd5
32.♖xd5 ♖f8 is winning for Black.

30...♙c3+

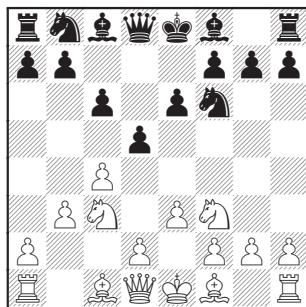
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Also in the Over 50s Glenn Flear beat
Margeir Petursson in a tough struggle

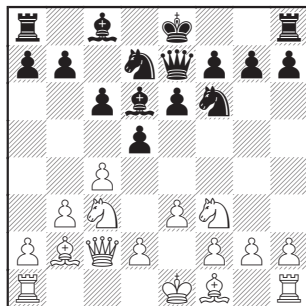
Margeir Petursson - Glenn Flear

TCh-EUR Senior +50 2024 Catez SLO (7.2)

1.♘f3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 e6 5.b3

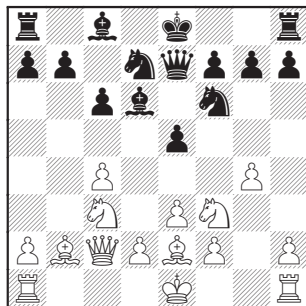


5...♘bd7 6.♙c2 ♙d6 7.♙b2 ♙e7



8.♙e2 dxc4 9.bxc4 e5 10.g4

The Bayonet attack.

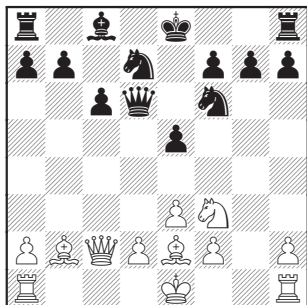


10...♘g4 Black accepts the challenge.

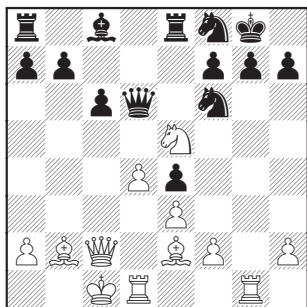
11. ♖e4 11. ♖g1 ♗c5 12.d4 (12.h3 ♗h6 13. ♖xg7 ♗f5 14.d3 ♗g6 trapping the rook) 12...exd4 13.exd4 ♗a6 with a slight edge.

11... ♗c7 12.c5 After 12. ♖g1 f5 13. ♗g3 g6 Black is better.

12... ♗gf6 13. ♗d6+ ♗xd6 14.cxd6 ♖xd6



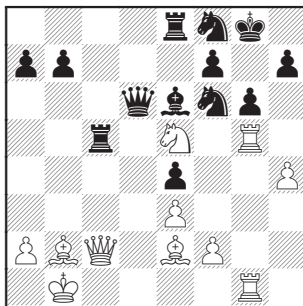
15. ♖g1 0-0 16.0-0-0 ♖e8 17.d4 e4 18. ♗e5 ♗f8



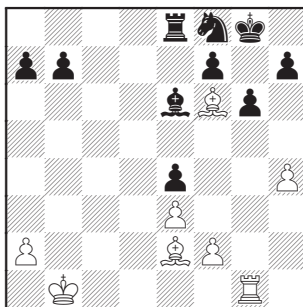
19. ♖g5 ♗e6 20. ♖b1 ♖ac8 20... ♗g6 Blocking the g-file is a good alternative.

21. ♖dg1 g6 22.h4 c5 22...h6 23. ♖5g3 c5 is worth consideration.

23.dxc5 ♖xc5

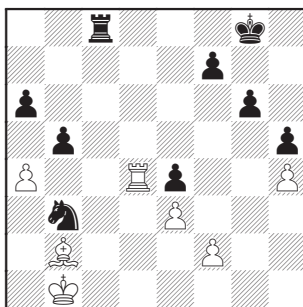


24. ♖xc5 ♖xc5 25. ♗g4 ♖xg5 26. ♗xf6+ ♖xf6 27. ♗xf6



27... ♖c8 28. ♖d1 ♗d7 Important to evict the Bishop to free the Black pieces from the defence of the back rank.

29. ♗b2 h5 30. ♖d6 a6 31. ♖d1 ♗c5 32. ♗c2 ♗c4 33. ♖d4 b5 34.a4 ♗b3 35. ♗xb3 ♗xb3

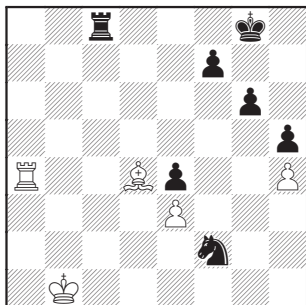


36. ♖d6 bxa4 37. ♖xa6 ♗c5 38. ♖a7 ♗d3 39. ♗d4 ♗xf2 40. ♖xa4



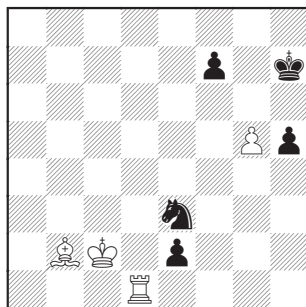
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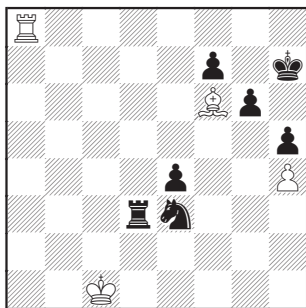


White threatens mate but Black has an escape route.

50...g5 51.hxg5 ♖g4 52.♙b2 e3 53.♙c2 e2 54.♙a1 ♖d1 55.♙xd1 ♙e3+



40...♙g4 41.♙a7 ♙f8 42.♙b2 ♙h6
43.♙f6 ♙f5 44.♙g5 ♙c6 45.♙a8+ ♙g7
46.♙a7 ♙d6 47.♙c1 ♙d3 48.♙a6 ♙xe3
49.♙f6+ ♙h7 50.♙a8



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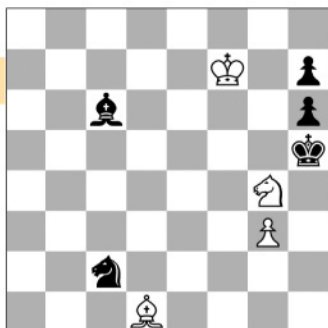
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Endgame Studies

by Ian Watson

ian@irwatson.uk

1

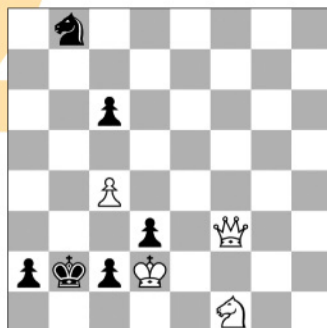


J. Beasley

The Problemist 1990

WIN

2

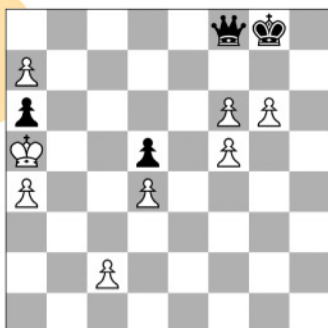


J. Beasley

The Problemist 2007

WIN

3

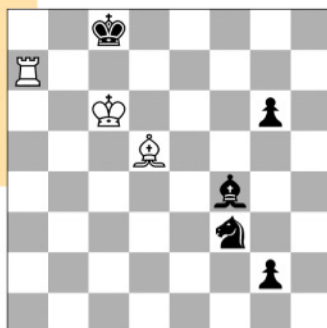


J. Beasley & J. Roycroft

The Problemist 1976

DRAW

4



J. Beasley

WCSC 1994

DRAW

THE PUZZLE KING OF BRITAIN

This month's studies celebrate John Beasley, who died in March. He was the Grand Old Man of the British endgame study, but his range of skills was extraordinarily wide and in particular he was a puzzle polymath. In the 19th century, the title "Puzzle King" was given to the American Sam Loyd. In recent years, we might have bestowed it on John Beasley, but I think he would have preferred a less bombastic version, so perhaps we can call him the Puzzle King of Britain.

I reviewed his book 'A Book of Bedtime Pawn Endings' in this column in February. In his habitually modest manner, he only included one of his own compositions in the book, so to do more justice to his compositional skill, here are four, starting with the pleasant 1990 study from *The Problemist*. The second, also from *The Problemist* but from 2007, shows what John named an "ultimate reciprocal zugzwang" meaning whoever is to play has to allow mate in one. The third is a joint composition with the other great figure of the British endgame study, John Roycroft. The fourth study was composed by him for use in the 1994 World Chess Solving Championship, for which he was the Director.

John composed very many types of puzzle. Perhaps my favourite is not a chess composition, but a double dummy bridge problem. You can find the details in John's book '51 Flights of Chess Fancy and a few other frolics'. Declarer makes three no trumps against any defence - routine stuff, it seems. Yes, but in this arrangement of the cards, *whichever* of the four players is declarer makes 3NT. It is scarcely credible that such an arrangement exists.

You'll find some of John's studies, and many of his puzzles, at jsbeasley.co.uk; there are more at arves.org where there are also details of his books.

The answers to the four studies are on page

The solutions are on page 447.

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS

This month's originals

We are always glad to welcome new names to this column, and it is a pleasure this month to include offerings from Sergey Tkachenko and Udo Marks.

In a balanced set of problems, I think (and hope) that the first and last will come in the 'easy and enjoyable' category, the middle two requiring more cerebral effort, albeit hopefully retaining the 'enjoyable' tag when the solution is either found or else read in the following text.

A (fairly) easy starter

In Kabe's problem there are two tries to consider. If White plays 1. ♖f5, he is not threatening mate next move, but it appears that Black may be in zugzwang, for now 1... ♙e3 would be met by 2. ♜xd6♯, 1... ♙xb4 by 2. ♜d4♯ and either move of the b3 pawn by 2. ♙xa4♯ - but there is no mating response if Black makes either of the two available moves of the b1 knight. Another zugzwang attempt is 1. ♜c4. Now those moves of the b1 knight allow 2. ♜xa3♯, and we still have 1... ♙e3/b2[♜bxa2]2. ♜xd6/♙xa4♯, but it's now 1... ♙xb4! that thwarts White. The key is 1. ♙e2!, still with no threat, but setting up a royal battery that proves mightily effective as Black tries to find an innocuous move - 1... ♙d4(♙xb4)2. ♙(x)d4♯; 1... ♜c3 2. ♙xc3♯; 1... ♜d2 2. ♙xd2♯; 1... ♜b2(bxa2) 2. ♙c2 and 1... ♙xe3 2. ♙xe3♯. A fine feature of this construction is that the white bishop had been fulfilling a significant role at d1 discouraging moves by the b3 pawn. For moves by that pawn, as well as for other possible black moves (notably 1... ♙xb4 and moves by the knight from b1) there are nicely changed mates.

Provoked checks...

... is the composers' heading for our second problem. To threaten mate on move three, it is necessary to bring the white king closer to its black counterpart; but it seems that 1. ♙f7 (threatening 2. ♙f6+ 2... ♙g5/♙e5 3. ♜xe4/♙xe4♯) must fail to pre-emptive moves by the black king, which throw a spanner in the works by

firing a battery from the f4 rook. At this point, a savvy solver might sense that this line is indeed the solution, because walking the white king into a battery, provoking checks, is exactly the sort of paradoxical play celebrated by problemists. And indeed upon closer inspection, it is revealed that each of the black king moves (which are Black's only defences) walks into a pin, and with the f4 rook thus immobilized we have the continuations 1... ♙g5+ 2. ♙e6! (threat 3. ♜xe4) 2... h4 3. ♙xg4♯ and 1... ♙e5+ 2. ♙xg6! (threat 3. ♙xe4) 2... ♙xd5 3. ♙4c5♯. The position may look rather heavy, but is, I think, surprisingly light considering the difficulty of the paradoxical task the composers had set themselves. It is probably good that Black has defences on move two (...h4/... ♙xd5), as there can be a sense of being 'short-changed' by a variation that simply ends with "and Black can't stop the threatened mate". It also has the good effect of getting some positive mileage out of the white queen and the a2 bishop.

Precision required

In Udo's problem, it is no surprise that the black king will be mated in the corner, but it transpires that great accuracy is needed in order to force mate on move seven. We start with 1. ♜d4 ♙b1 (for as long as possible Black avoids playing ...bxc3; here it would lose in short order: 2. ♜a3 c2 3. ♜4xc2♯) 2. ♜e2 ♙a1 (after 2... bxc3 we get to ♜4xc2♯ on move 5) 3. ♜e3 ♙b1 (here, if Black plays 3... bxc3 play will rejoin the main line) 4. ♜c2 bxc3 (at last!) 5. ♜a3+ ♙a1 6. ♜d4c2 7. ♜4xc2♯.

(See page 434)

One of Ljubomir's easier helpmates

I always have a slight reservation when a solver comments “nice, but easy”. It’s that word “but” that very slightly worries me - it seems to imply that the quality of a chess problem is inextricably linked to its difficulty as a puzzle. I’m a fan of difficult helpmates, but also enjoy the pleasure of discovering (easily) a profusion of related solutions, such as our eminent Slovenian contributor provides in creating seven variations on the same theme here. Such problems also have the good function of encouraging readers to have a go at solving, and so kudos if you saw all or most of

these solutions (remember: in helpmate solutions the collaborative move sequences are initiated by Black) - 1. ♔h4 ♚xh6 2. ♙g5 ♚a6#; 1. ♚h1 ♚xh12. ♜f2 ♚a1#; 1. ♚h2 ♚xh2 2.c1=♚ ♚a2#;

1. ♚h3 ♚xh3 2.e2 ♚a3#;

1. ♚h4 ♚xh4 2.f3 ♚a4#; 1. ♚h5 ♚xh5 2.e4 ♚a5#;

And 1. ♚g8+ ♜xg8 2.e6 ♜b7#. (That final solution, ‘the same but different’, seems to me to be an important ‘grace note’.)

SOLUTIONS TO ENDGAMES

(See page 444)

Beasley 1990

1. ♖f6 ♙f3 2. ♙xf3 ♜d4 3. ♙d1 ♜e2 4. ♜xh6 ♖xh6 5.g4 ♜~ 6.g5 mate.

3... ♜f3 4. ♖f5 ♜d4+ 5. ♖e5 ♜c6+ 6. ♖f6.

Beasley 2007

1. ♜f6+ ♖b1 2. ♜a1+ ♖xa1 3. ♖c1 ♜d7/ a6 4.c5 ♜xc5 5. ♜d2 and the “ultimate reciprocal zugzwang” arises.

Beasley & Roycroft

1.f7+ ♖g7 2. ♖b6 ♜c8 3.a5 ♖f8 4.f6 ♜a8 5.c3 ♜c8 6.a8 ♜ ♜xa8 7. ♖c7 ♜a7+ 8. ♖c8 ♜a8+ 9. ♖c7 draws. Draw by perpetual check is commonplace, but here it is the player that is trying to *win* who gives the perpetual check.

There are various White tries on moves one, two and three: 1. ♖b6? ♜c8 2.f7+ ♖f8: 2. ♖xa6? ♜c8+ 3. ♖b6 ♖f8;

2.f6+? ♖xg6 3. ♖b6 ♜c8 4.f8 ♜ ♜xf8 5. ♖b7 ♜f7+ 6. ♖xa6 ♜f8 7. ♖b7 ♜b4+ 8. ♖c8 ♜xa4 or here 6. ♖b6 ♜e8 7. ♖b7 ♜d7+ 8. ♖b8 ♜xa4 9.a8 ♜ ♜e8+ or in this line 3. ♖xa6 ♜c8+ 4. ♖b6 ♖xf7.

Beasley 1994

1. ♜a8+ ♙b8 2. ♜a1 g1 ♜ 3. ♜xg1 ♜xg1 4. ♙e4 g5 5. ♙f5+ ♖d8 6. ♙g4 draws. White’s king can prevent the Black king escaping from the top right-hand corner. Why was it necessary to insert 1. ♜a8+ before ♜a1? It forced the Black bishop to occupy the b8 square; without that, the Black king would have been able to respond to ♙f5+ with ... ♖b8 and extract itself from the prison by going the long way round. When he composed this for the World Chess Solving Championship, John was hoping that some of the top solvers would not notice that nuance. They did, though, or rather if they weren’t sure which of the two first moves was the right one, they opted for 1. ♜a8+ because it looked more study-like than the try 1. ♜a1? Strong solvers are annoying like that. Anyway, it was a nice try by John.

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